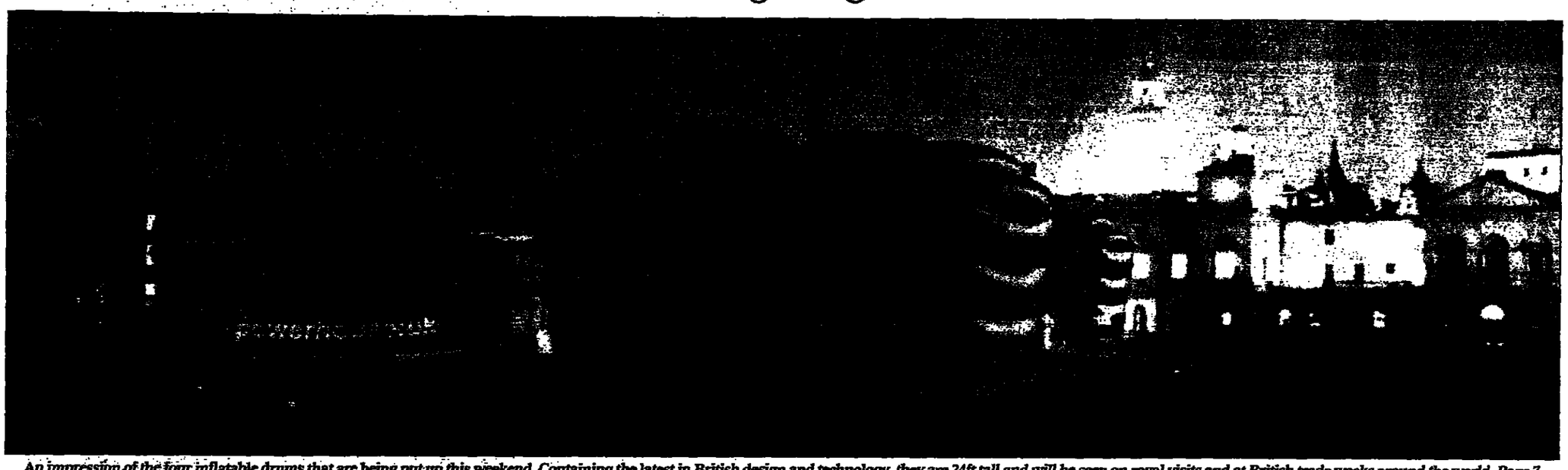


THE TIMES

40P

No. 66,143 SATURDAY MARCH 7 1998 http://www.the-times.co.uk

On parade at Horse Guards — the designer globules that will boost Blair's Britain



An impression of the four inflatable drums that are being put up this weekend. Containing the latest in British design and technology, they are 24ft tall and will be seen on royal visits and at British trade weeks around the world. Page 7

Brown blocks offshore tax loopholes

BY ANDREW PIERCE, CAROLINE MERRELL AND GAVIN LUMSDEN

THE Chancellor launched a surprise pre-emptive strike yesterday against businessmen moving billions of pounds from offshore trusts in an attempt to avoid punitive taxes in the Budget.

The action, which is thought to have hit hundreds of wealthy people, shocked tax advisers who had been encouraging clients to exploit the rules to bring money back to Britain before the expected crackdown on offshore trusts on March 17.

It also raised further questions about the position of Geoffrey Robinson, the Paymaster General, who is a beneficiary of a £12.5 million Guernsey-based trust. Mr Robinson was the only member of the five-strong Treasury team not to be told in advance about yesterday's announcement, prompting Tory claims that he was a "lame duck" minister who should resign. Mr Robinson will not be affected by the crackdown: he is not liable to tax on any capital he receives from the Orion Trust because it was set up by a foreigner.

Nevertheless, he was deliberately kept in the dark because of the controversy over the Orion Trust, and the official statement was made by Dawn Primarolo, the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, who is junior to Mr Robinson. "He has no influence over this type of tax policy. He had no advance knowledge of this statement," one Treasury official said. "The first he knew was when it was announced officially."

That provoked renewed Tory calls for the minister to resign. David Heathcoat-Amory, Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury, said: "It is inconceivable that a Treasury minister is excluded from all discussions and knowledge of a policy which will form the centrepiece of a Budget. If they are trying to ringfence Geoffrey Robinson, it is the clearest indication yet that he is not suited to be a Treasury minister."

The Inland Revenue refused to comment yesterday on why the loophole had been closed 11 days ahead of the Budget, but leading tax accountants and lawyers believe that the department had been alerted to a particularly large transaction that had cost a "substantial amount" in lost revenue.

Before yesterday's ruling, British residents with offshore trusts could bring a trust onshore, then sell their interest to a third party based offshore — often a bank or another trust. By this process, they would avoid paying capital gains tax, which is 40 per cent at the highest rate. The ruling which came into force at 11am yesterday means they will not now be able to do this if the money has ever been held offshore.

The Treasury had been alerted that billions of pounds were being transferred and a spokesman said: "If we had not acted immediately, the Treasury would have lost hundreds of millions of pounds."

Jo Goldby, a solicitor at Theodore Goddard, said: "It seems a bit harsh. The Government must have thought there was enough money at stake in the next 11 days to do something about it now." John Battersby of KPMG suggested: "It could be the self-assessment tax forms which had to be submitted by January 31 may have thrown up evidence of a large number of disposals of interests in trusts."

Rural council tax bills soar

Shire council tax bills are rising by nearly 12 per cent — almost twice the increase in towns and cities — provoking claims that ministers were pursuing a "tax the countryside" agenda.

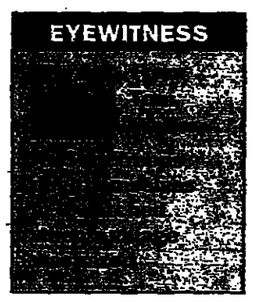
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Hope amid the Balkan cruelty

EYEWITNESS





THE Kosovo village of Prekaz was being systematically burned yesterday, still surrounded by Serb troops dug into forward positions beneath forests concealing Albanians hiding and fighting for their lives.

Through the wooden slats of a cowshed in Upper Prekaz, a surreal scene encapsulating the cruelty and beauty of the Balkans unfolded. In the foreground, about half a mile across tumbling fields and hedgerows, a dozen Serb soldiers were standing by their foxholes, occasionally dashing across open ground. One field away from them the cluster of red-tiled houses smouldered, before a freshly-started fire sent a great plume of smoke rising. A volley of automatic fire rang out from the woods.

In the background the Bjeshket e Nemura — the mountain of doom — stood in snow-capped splendour, marking the border with Montenegro. And all around the hedgerows and thickets burgeoned with primroses and catkins. A farmer fed chickens just out of range of Serb sniper fire, looking up only as artillery shells crashed down on another village.

The professor who crouched with us nodded sadly. "How many people can you imagine must be dead down there? When the Serbs say 20 you can always multiply it five times."

Just beyond Prekaz the water tower marking the ammunition factory in Srbirca, the base for the Serbian reign of terror in Kosovo, jutted out. The farmer whose cowshed had afforded us our lookout pointed to the concealed tank positions. "You should have heard the shelling yesterday," he said. "Today is a holiday."

As we walked back the professor continued to muse on his people's plight. "I want to embrace the future, Microsoft Windows, the 21st century, he said. "And yet the Serbs can only see through a window to the past and things they want to hold on to. Our culture is about energy, theirs is about force."

At the crest of the hill, the threat of snipers now safely behind us, we met two farmers, one with a shotgun, the other carrying an Italian army rifle dating from before the Second World War. "We have to try anything we can," he said. On his baseball cap was "Boston Fighting Cocks".

A village elder in a more traditional Albanian skull cap waved his umbrella in anger towards the Serb lines.

The professor advised us the Serbs might advance, and we jumped into his Lada, driven by another academic colleague. We jolted through abandoned villages, their menfolk hiding in the woods, their women and children refugees in Mitrovica. For an hour and a half the Lada scraped over the ruts, occasionally giving way to horse-drawn carts carrying food for the men in the woods. Tractors packed with the last refugees trundled along with us. Groups of men occasionally dashed down to greet us, and the professor advised them how safe it was to go back. The professor talked about logic and DNA, and his fears for his four children's future, as the artillery fire faded into the distance.

He wished us a peaceful return to Pristina, asking us to fax our articles to him once the Serbs had restored Mitrovica's telephone links. "After Milosevic, e-mail," he said.

Albanian alert, page 16

The Times up, Telegraph down

Readership of *The Times* has hit a new peak of 2,151,000 a day and rose by 268,000 a day between August 1997 and January 1998 compared with the same period a year earlier.

The increase was particularly marked among young readers (up 22 per cent) and women (up 17 per cent), mostly from the affluent ABC1 social classes (up 13 per cent) and were the highest achieved by any national newspaper.

According to the National Readership Survey, *The Times* has 1,164,000 readers under 45, up 211,000 year-on-year, compared with 873,000 for *The Daily Telegraph* (down 9 per cent).

Among all adults, readership of *The Times* was up by 14 per cent compared with a fall of 3 per cent for *The Daily Telegraph*.

Patten wins book apology

BY RAYMOND SNODDY
MEDIA EDITOR

PUBLISHERS HarperCollins and Chris Patten, the last British Governor of Hong Kong, last night settled their acrimonious dispute over the dropping of his book *East and West*.

Under the settlement of the breach of contract lawsuit, HarperCollins, like *The Times* part of The News Corporation, Rupert Murdoch's international media empire, has "unreservedly apologised" for any suggestion that *East and West* was rejected for not being up to proper professional standards or being too "boring". A statement issued last night by HarperCollins and Mr Patten said that it was accepted "that these allegations are untrue and ought never to have been made".

The precise details of the settlement are to remain confidential but in addition to the withdrawal of the allegations and the apology, it is believed Mr Patten will receive a modest financial sum.

Mr Patten made clear he intended to say no more about the settlement and that he intended to concentrate on completing the book, which will be published by Macmillan in September. Earlier, Mr Murdoch, who has been widely critised for deciding that HarperCollins should not publish the book, but who has denied either trying to censor it, or telling anyone to lie about the reasons for dropping it, said there had been no winners or losers in the controversy.

"Mistakes been made and we all share responsibility," Mr Murdoch said.

The News Corp chairman and chief executive went out of his way, however, to express his confidence in Eddie Bell, the executive chairman of

Continued on page 2, col 1

Foxy Tories run with hounds to outwit hunt ban



BY JAMES LANDALE
POLITICAL REPORTER

IF A MAN wearing a top hat is asking whether a dog is the same thing as a hound while coming to the defence of the common garden rat, you can be sure you are in the House of Commons on a wet Friday in March.

Tory MPs yesterday deployed every trick in the Parliamentary rule book to delay the parliamentary progress of the increasingly doomed Bill to ban hunting. For many of them, the required pedantry, prolixity and persistence were second nature.

For five tortuous hours, MPs opposed to a ban on hunting took as much time as they could to consider whether the Wild Mammals (Hunting with Dogs) Bill actually applied to hounds, as hunting dogs are described.

Or perhaps, as Christopher Gill, Tory MP for Ludlow, inquired, the Bill might only apply to dogs, as in the male version of man's best friend. Would it, he asked, be all right to hunt with bitches?

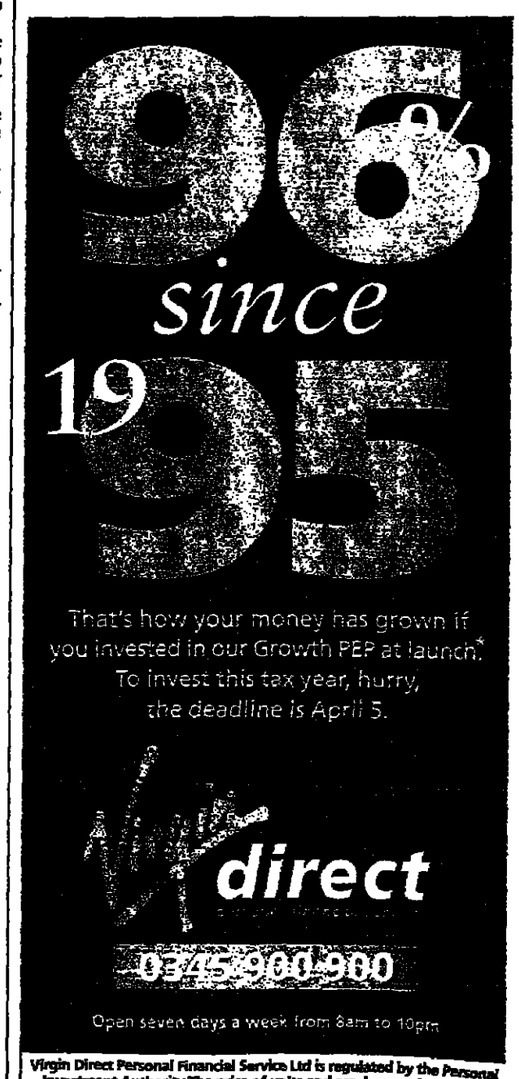
Other Tories tabled more than 150 amendments demanding important changes to the Bill such as swapping the word "permit" to "give permission to".

John Gummer, the former Tory Minister, wanted to know why Labour MPs were so keen on protecting foxes while quite happy for poor old rats and rabbits to be hunted.

Sir Peter Emerey (C, Devon East) tried to delay a division by donning a top hat before addressing the Deputy Speaker. The arcane tradition, required when making a point of order during a vote, was designed to make it easier to attract the Speaker's eye.

Other MPs delayed a vote for so long that the Deputy Speaker was forced to take the extremely rare step of ordering the Deputy Serjeant at Arms, bearing his usual sword, into the lobbies to find out what was going on. Dennis Skinner, Labour MP for Bolsover, shouted: "Next time we will send in the dogs."

The debate was adjourned until next Friday when it will almost certainly die through lack of Parliamentary time.



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PLUS: Paris Fashion
Grace Bradberry on Mark Jacobs' debut with Louis Vuitton



TUESDAY
Urban downsizing
Metropolitan life on the cheap

WEDNESDAY
Inter//face
The technology behind Uma Thurman's genes



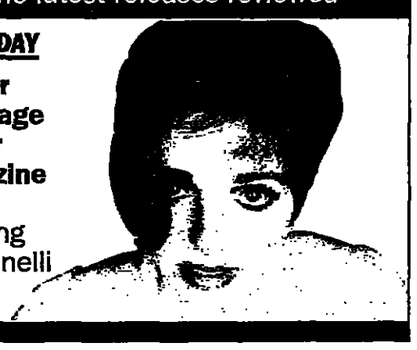
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– 14-page supplement



THURSDAY
Cinema: Sex, the president and war
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Rock and pop
The latest releases reviewed

SATURDAY
In your 100-page colour magazine LIZA:
Reviving the Minelli magic



Rail companies may have to share profits

Prescott angered by £14 million payout, reports **Arthur Leathley**

MINISTERS are preparing to force railway companies to share their profits with the Government to curb windfall payouts to directors.

John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, is understood to be angry that seven rail executives will share some £14 million after the takeover of their train company was approved yesterday.

He is drawing up plans to make train operators, who received £1.8 billion in subsidies this year, share profits over a certain amount; possibly giving the Government a 25 per cent share in the most profitable routes.

The move emerged after Mr Prescott denounced as inadequate £75 million worth of conditions that the rail franchising director had imposed for the takeover of Great Western trains, one of the biggest operators.

However, the suggestion of tighter controls on companies that arrange takeovers, which would require legislation, is likely to spark a rush among some operators to sell. Several large firms are already considering takeover bids for the smallest of the 25 operators.

The directors of Great Western secured their payout after the company, which runs two of Britain's most heavily-subsidised services, was taken over by FirstGroup, the bus and train company.

Great Western's inter-city services to South Wales and the South West have been heavily criticised because of poor punctuality, which has deteriorated by some 20 per cent. Under the conditions imposed on the takeover deal, the new company faces additional fines for late and cancelled trains. Season ticket holders have also been given a week's free travel under the takeover plan.

Share values in the company, now worth £140 million, have increased massively since the directors led a £1.5 million management buy-out when the company was one of the first to be sold off in 1996.

Brian Scott, chief executive of Great Western who has 100,800 shares according to the latest annual report, stands to gain some £3.7million on shares that he bought for £37,000.

Mr Scott, who worked for British Rail for almost 40 years before leading a management buy-out in 1996, was once one of the biggest critics of plans for rail privatisation, arguing against the splitting up of track and operating companies. He wrote to John MacGregor, the former Tory Transport Secretary in 1993: "As an experienced, professional railway business manager, I would not put my money into a train operating company."

Richard George, the managing director, who has 80,800 shares, is the next largest shareholder. His holding is worth some £2.9 million.

Mike Carroll, the deputy managing director, Ian Cusworth, train fleet director, and John Sellers, finance director, each held 60,800 shares, while Maurice Warren, non-executive chairman, held 50,000 shares. Ann Robinson, a non-executive director, holds 20,000.

Mr Prescott is reported to be "very frustrated" that John O'Brien, the rail franchising director, was unable to impose a profit-sharing scheme when setting conditions for the new company.

Although Mr O'Brien demanded £75 million worth of improvements over the next four years, mostly in new trains, he does not have the power to introduce profit-sharing arrangements.

Mr Prescott said that the conditions had been set because of new instructions he gave Mr O'Brien last year. "It's an increase in some of the investment, and the timings, and stronger penalties and a reduction of subsidy. That comes out of my new direction but I don't think it's adequate."

Although he admitted that he was powerless to block the takeover, Mr Prescott added that he "wouldn't be so sure" that other similar deals would follow. He pointed to the profit-sharing arrangement that he had negotiated recently with Eurotunnel, the operators of the Channel Tunnel, and said: "Clearly I will be considering what powers I have to get the taxpayers' share in these matters but we don't think that the windfall tax is the best way of doing it."

FirstGroup already has 24.5 per cent of the shares of Great Western Holdings, which runs Great Western and North Western trains in northwest England. The deal involves FirstGroup, which already runs the Great Eastern franchise in Essex and Suffolk, buying up the remaining shares in GWH and taking over GWH's two rail routes.



Richard George, left, Ann Robinson and John Sellers



Brian Scott



Maurice Warren



Ian Cusworth



Mike Carroll

NEWS IN BRIEF

Blair accused on deaf veterans' benefit cuts

Tony Blair was accused of double standards yesterday after the Government said that it was upholding benefit cuts to deaf ex-servicemen, a move he described in December 1996 as "shabby and mean-minded". Fifteen months later, Mr Blair has also decided that newly retired servicemen will also not be entitled to special deafness payments. Under new regulations, servicemen who suffer hearing loss will still receive a benefit, but this will be uprated only in line with other benefits because medical evidence says the injuries are not aggravated over time.

Lord Mackay of Ardbrecknish, the Tory Social Security Minister who first decided to introduce the cuts, accused the Government of having behaved disgracefully when it attacked the cuts. Labour defended the move and said that its decision to act on the recommendations of an independent review, chaired by Sir Kenneth Calman, the Chief Medical Officer, contrasted with the "secretive" way in which the Tories had handled the issue.

Princess stays in hospital

Princess Margaret is to spend another weekend in King Edward VII's Hospital for Officers, Central London. Kensington Palace said. It is understood that the Princess, who suffered a mild stroke 13 days ago, is continuing to make steady progress. She was visited on Thursday night by Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, whose second hip operation was at the same hospital four weeks ago.

Ruling on porn channel

The output of Eros TV, a satellite channel beamed into Britain from Russia, has been deemed to be against good taste and decency. The Independent Television Commission has told Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary, that the material is mainly "unacceptable pornography". If he agrees, Eros TV will be given 15 days to mend its ways or face an order making it illegal to advertise or sell the service.

Canadian alert on BSE

Canadian government officials have issued warnings over beef products, and food inspectors have begun removing British tinned goods, including Bovril, Bisto gravy, shepherd's pie and broths, from shops. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency said it had been unable to obtain assurances from the British Government that none of the beef in the products came from British herds.

Cash aid for tigers

Michael Meacher, the Environment Minister, announced a £335,000 aid package to help to save endangered species. Most of the money will be used to protect elephants and tigers from poachers. The minister, marking the 25th anniversary of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, urged international support for the ban on trade in ivory and tiger parts.

No thought for food

British children are not interested in knowing about food, only in eating it, according to a new charity. In a MORI poll for the Good Food Foundation, which aims to improve understanding of food issues, one in six children between 8 and 14 said they could not cook or prepare any food, but more than a third claimed to be able to make sandwiches with only a little help. 31 per cent could manage toast.

Kennedy's yacht for sale

President Kennedy's yacht, on which he was picnicking when he heard the news that the Berlin Wall was being built, is up for sale. The motor yacht *Marlin*, owned by the Kennedy family for 18 years, is expected to fetch about £125,000 at Christie's in New York on April 25. It is being sold with with several items left behind on the vessel by the family, including sporting and fishing gear and silverware.

Special delivery pays off

A thief who returned a five-figure haul that was in a case he had snatched at Victoria station was jailed for nine months but told by Judge Bathurst Norman that it was only half what he could have been given. Southwark Crown Court heard that Harry Gaines had gone to a police station, confessed and promised to have the property, worth £32,500, returned. Most of the valuables then arrived by cab.

Speed trials cleared

Village councillors dropped their objections to a businessman using their beach over Easter and Whitsun to practise for his attempt in September on the world motorcycle speed record. Richard Brown, 33, of West Wickham, Buckinghamshire, promised to keep away from day-trippers at Pendine Sands, near Carmarthen, West Wales. The 322mph record is held by an American.

Patten wins apology over China book

Continued from page 1

HarperCollins. "I have total confidence in the proven talents and abilities of Eddie Bell and the entire publishing team," Mr Murdoch said.

"Eddie, Adrian Bourne (managing director) and Adrian Laing (general counsel) have had a difficult few days but I know that their professionalism, experience and above all their determination will take the company successfuly forward," the News Corp chairman added.

The only outstanding litigation now involves Stuart Proffitt, the senior HarperCollins who is suing for constructive dismissal after saying he would not give false reasons why East and West was being dropped.

Meanwhile novellist Fay Weldon is negotiating a new four-book deal with HarperCollins and Bernard Cornwell has signed for another book in the Sharp series.

Earlier this week Mr Murdoch said that he had made it clear as long ago as July that he did not want HarperCollins to publish East and West partly because he was "negative" about Mr Patten who he believed helped to undermine Mrs Thatcher. Most analysts have assumed that Mr Murdoch's hopes for the Chinese market and an unwillingness to upset the Chinese political leadership was the main factor.

Last night Michael Sissons, Mr Chris Patten's literary agent and a key player in the dispute said in his first interview that the credibility of the senior management of HarperCollins "is very seriously impared".

He told Channel 4 News this was not only because of the events of the past fortnight and "a very gross porky " at the centre of the story but also because of the deafening silence that had followed it.

Mr Sissons said that "the porky" he had in mind was the excuses given for turning down the book. Mr Patten's literary agent also criticised the editor of The Times Peter Stothard for saying that The Times had been offered and had turned down newspaper seriaisation rights to *East and West*.

"At no point has my firm offered the serialisation rights in Chris Patten's book to The Times and therefre they can't have rejected the rights they have no been offered in material they have not seen," Mr Sissons said.

In the studio Mr Stothard explained that it was the job of a senior *Times* executive Brian MacArthur to "sniff" out books from publishers and agents at an early stage. The Times had been successful in finding out about new books and winning the serialisation rights. Mr MacArthur brought serialisation prospects to him "almost like news stories" to decide whether to try to win the rights or not. Mr Stothard added when serialisation rights could cost anything from £50,000 to £70,000 he had to chose books that would "do the good for *The Times* that I need to be done by buying it. On that basis I turned it down."

The *Times* editor said it was "absolutely outrageous" to suggest that the possibiity of negotiating the rights had been rejected because of the Mr Murdoch's interests.

"I completely deny that," said Mr Stothard, who added that he did not think the serialisation of the Patten book would sell enough copies of *The Times* to justify the cost. *The Times* turned down the serial rights to several hundred books a year.

Earlier, the Editor said the paper had been dragged into a dispute between a publisher and a politician "because our opponents want to smear us with anything they can".

Also on Channel 4 News, Andrew Neil, former editor of the *Sunday Times* expressed surprise that *The Times* had not beenimterested.



Patten: now back to work on book

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Fortune teller accuses Gucci 'Black Widow'

Friend has finally given evidence against ex-wife of murdered fashion heir, writes **Richard Owen**

THE ex-wife of Maurizio Gucci, *the fashion empire heir* murdered three years ago, nursed such a "fierce and insatiable hatred" for her ex-husband that she ordered his killing, according to the clairvoyant who was once her closest confidante.

The story of the Gucci murder — a saga of sexual betrayal, money, murder and high fashion — has gripped Italy since Patrizia Reggiani *was arrested in January last* year on charges of involvement in the killing of Signor Gucci, 46, who was gunned down by two hitmen in a *Milan street in March 1995.* The two alleged hitmen are also awaiting trial, together with a hotel doorman and Pina Auremmia, the former clairvoyant from Naples.

Investigating magistrates told *Il Corriere della Sera*, the Milan newspaper, that Signora Auremmia had refused to give evidence against Signora Reggiani for the past year, but this week had changed her mind and "decided to talk". Police are said to have persuaded her to break her long silence by claiming that Signora Reggiani — having failed to escape prosecution by pleading that she had a brain tumour — was planning to pin all the blame for the killing on her "fortune teller".

Signora Auremmia told police the Guccis had become estranged because of Signor Gucci's affair with another woman, and his "neglect of our children". She claimed that Signora Reggiani had confided on a number of occasions that she wanted her husband dead, and this had become "an obsession, a fixation". The widow had eventually asked Signora Auremmia to help her recruit gangsters from the Naples underworld to carry out the murder. Signora Reggiani denies the charges.



Patrizia Reggiani: "a hatred for ex-husband"

Dubbed "The Black Widow" by the Italian press, Signora Reggiani, still glamorous and striking at fifty, is due to go on trial in April. Both women face jail sentences of thirty years. Gucci is still a name to conjure with, with its classic shoes and handbags much sought after. The stories of Signora Auremmia's betrayal of her former friend vied in the pages of yesterday's Italian press with full page advertisements for the company's products.

Gucci no longer belongs to the family, but to Investcorp, a Bahrain investment group. Under new management what was becoming a loss making company under Maurizio has become a profitable enterprise with annual sales of more than £30 million. Maurizio — the founder's grandson — *shed his own holdings for* a reported 100 million dollars as he sank deeper into debt in the 1990s, selling his last shares shortly before his death in a pool of blood on March 27, 1995. Increasingly Maurizio was also often at odds with his wife, the daughter of a laundress who ruthlessly climbed the social ladder by becoming the mistress of a self-made Milan businessman. According to friends, she wanted to marry "a man with a name and money to match" and found her target in Maurizio Gucci, who fell in love with *her Elizabeth Taylor looks and* married her in 1972, despite fierce opposition from his father Rodolfo, who regarded her as a gold digger. The couple had two daughters; but the business began to decline, and Maurizio's eye began to rove. They separated in 1984 and later divorced.

According to Signora Auremmia, who has reportedly "confessed all" to the Milan investigating magistrate, Signora Reggiani was "livid" when her ex-husband took up with Paola Franchi, a striking blonde interior decorator.

"She often confessed to me her intention to eliminate her ex-husband," Signora Auremmia told police. "After their separation there was a climate of venom between them which in her case degenerated into hatred. She accused him of abandoning the family and, worse still, wasting the Gucci millions."



LUCA BRUNO

One of the designs from Donatella Versace's autumn/winter collection, which she presented in Milan yesterday. Designing alone was "harder than expected", she said

Versace's sister is clearly cut from the same cloth

FROM HEATH BROWN IN MILAN

"WITH this collection I have more to prove than the last," Donatella Versace said before her latest fashion presentation in Milan last night.

This was her second solo show for the Versace main label after the murder of her brother, Gianni, last year.

"*After my brother's* death my first collection would always be forgiven but now, with this, I am more nervous of the *reactions*," she said before the preview of her autumn/winter designs in the Via Gesu Palazzo.

Having worked alongside Gianni most of her life in the design atelier, Donatella was asked *if the task of designing* alone was proving to be harder than she thought it would be.

"Much," she replied, *but went on to* dispel rumours that she was about to pass on the mantle of designer in chief to a new rising star, as had been reported. "For now I want to direct the design team," she said.

Naomi Campbell opened the show dressed in a Versace trademark metal-mesh bustier with lurex-shot pinstripe skirt and rock'n'roll, diamante-studded, biker boots.

Silhouettes were long and lean. Kitsch glamour, so long associated with Versace, was in evidence but with a new sense of style. Luminescent fabrics were mixed with cashmere, and tightly woven bouclé was metallicised in tight trousers and tops.

Drama as fire delays nanny appeal

FROM TUNKU VARADARAJAN IN BOSTON

THE au pair Louise Woodward's appeal before the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court was postponed yesterday after a fire in the basement of the courthouse led to the evacuation of *the building.* The hearing will resume on Monday.

Miss Woodward, who was present in the *smoke-filled building at* the time, was yesterday described by her lawyers as "shaken and upset" by the events.

Sources in the courthouse said that the fire was set off by two electrical transformers, which "kicked in and exploded". A British photographer said: "There were two sounds, like muffled booms. *Minutes later* they stretchered a man out. He had an oxygen mask over his face and seemed to be in some distress."

The man was later identified as an electrician who had been working on the transformers, which overloaded because of all the television crews present.

Assuming that there is no fire on Monday, lawyers for Miss Woodward will ask the court to find her not guilty of manslaughter, the offence of which she stands convicted. The prosecution, for its part, will ask the court to reinstate her conviction for second-degree murder, overturned last year by the judge, Hiller B. Zobel.

Oasis singer is bailed after fan says his nose was broken

BY ROGER MAYNARD AND LIN JENKINS

LIAM GALLAGHER was bailed by an Australian court yesterday for allegedly assaulting a British fan and then walked straight into another controversy when he rowed with his brother on stage with his band Oasis.

The 25-year-old singer denies *head-butting Benjamin* Jones and breaking his nose as the 19-year-old tourist tried to take his photograph at Quay West apartments in Brisbane, where the band was performing later.

Magistrates in the city were told that Gallagher walked over in an apparently friendly *manner* and embraced Mr Jones before pulling away and thrusting his head into the face of the fan. Gallagher was released on bail of A$10,000 dollars (£3,906) and the case adjourned until June 9 for a three-day preliminary hearing which will decide if he is to stand trial before a judge in the district court.

His lawyer said he would "strenuously" defend the charge. Terry O'Gorman said in a statement that Gallagher would be vigorously defending the matter. "Liam Gallagher, like any other person in an Australian court, is entitled to the presumption of innocence," he said. "It is *expected that there will be no* pre-judgment on the facts of the matter until the facts are aired in the contested preliminary hearing."



Liam Gallagher is escorted to the court in Brisbane yesterday, where he denied assaulting a British fan

Gallagher sat with his head bowed throughout the short hearing. Ian Hatcher, a Queensland police spokesman, told the court a number of fans had been waiting outside the accommodation where the band were staying. "This tourist took a photograph and a band member came across the road and allegedly put his arm around the tourist and broke his nose."

Mr Jones later telephoned his parents in Winkleigh, Devon, to assure them that while he was suffering a certain amount of pain, he had not been seriously hurt. He told them he had returned to the hostel where he is staying after receiving treatment at a local hospital.

His mother Diane Jones said he and his girlfriend Emma were part way through a year travelling the world and had gone to the venue to try to take a photograph before going to the concert. She said her son did not think he had been mistaken for a press photographer.

"Ben was dressed in shorts, a T-shirt and baseball hat so I don't think Oasis thought he was a photographer. He said his injuries were sore and painful. It looked on TV like he had a black eye. But Ben is pretty laid back. It was a nasty shock but he seems to have come out of it OK."

Mr Jones and his girlfriend are planning to move on to Sydney and then to New Zealand before returning to England in the summer.

The couple had intended to go to the concert at which fans were treated to a tempremental display by the band. Liam Gallagher kicked an amplifier and walked off stage after a clash with brother Noel, a common on-stage occurrence for the volatile pair. The band was also jeered by the 6,000 strong audience when they declined to give an encore.

Ticket sales were given a boost by the unscheduled extra publicity, but the performance failed to impress the critics. One local radio station described it as a shambles.

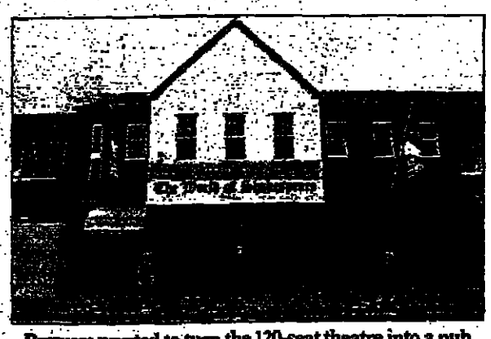
Theatre saved for Stratford

Helen Johnstone on a victory for the RSC's less famous neighbour

THE Waterside Theatre has won its fight to stay in Stratford-upon-Avon. A public inquiry has found for the local council, which had blocked plans by the brewers J.D. Wetherspoon to turn the 120-seater into a pub. The council had argued that this would mean a loss of cultural heritage.

Dismissing the brewers' appeal to the Environment Department, the inspector, Gyllian Grindey, said turning the building into a pub would harm Stratford's distinctiveness. She ruled that any future plans for the building should include theatre use.

The actress Susannah York had supported the Friends of the Waterside Theatre by travelling from London to address the inquiry. The actress, who has performed to acclaim at the nearby Royal Shakespeare Theatre, declared: "Once a theatre has gone no matter how large or how small, it is another brick removed from the foundation of our culture." Her speech brought applause — followed by a rebuke from the inspector that clapping at a public inquiry was not appropriate.

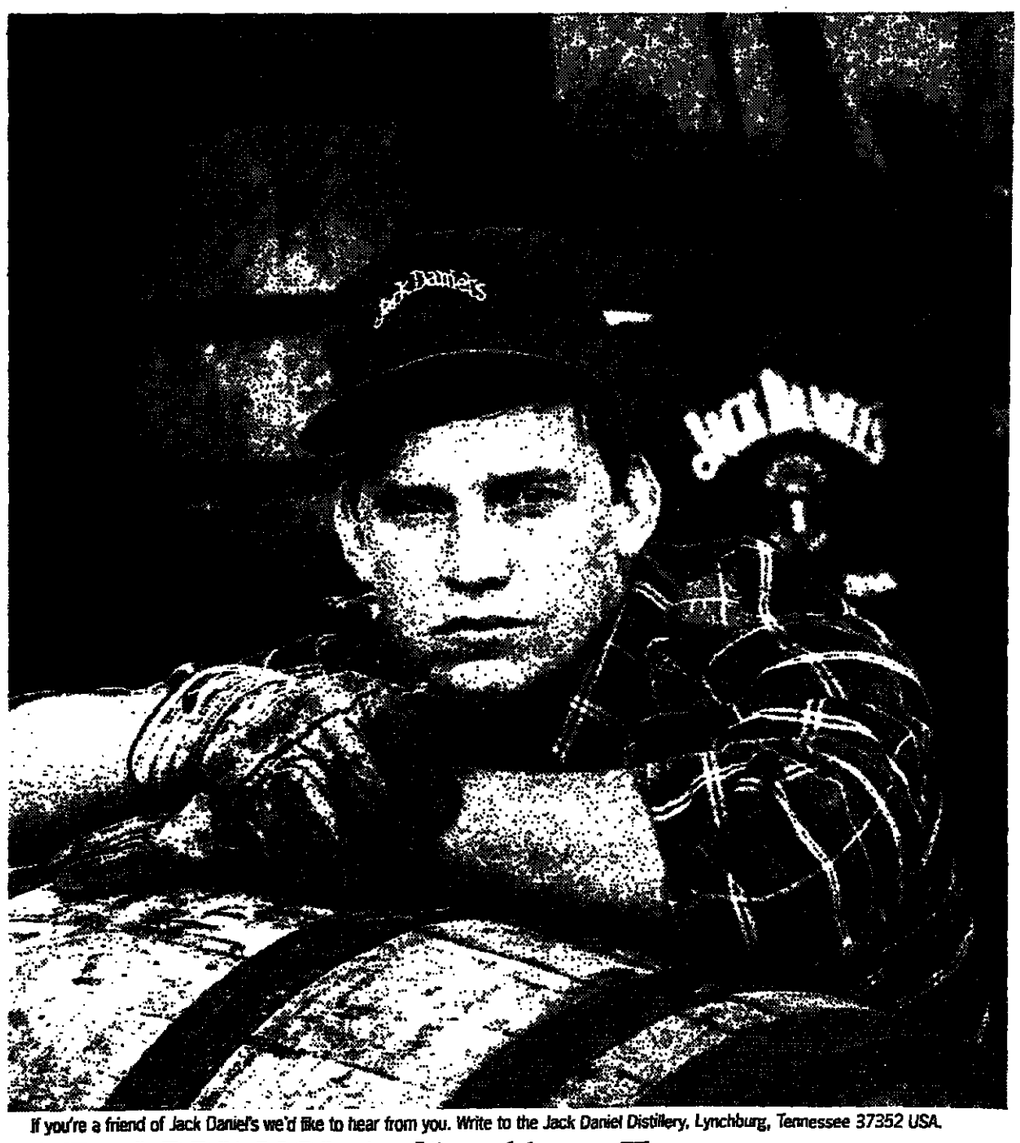


Brewers wanted to turn the 120-seat theatre into a pub

Yesterday she said that the decision was "great news". Geoffrey Lees, who led the campaign, has written to thank her for her contribution. He said last night: "We are all delighted and are grateful to everyone who backed us." The council is now awaiting an application by a Stratford businessman who wants to purchase the building and offer it to the theatre company at a peppercorn rent.

The council is also applying for lottery and Arts Council funding to refurbish the theatre as a venue for local amateur and touring groups. When the Waterside closed last year, Stratford lost its only venue for amateur productions.

The budding actor Timmy James, aged 10, from Coventry, was also credited with securing council support for the fight to keep the theatre. Timmy, who belongs to the God's Own theatre group in Kenilworth, Warwickshire, had told the inquiry: "I have no objection to pubs, but what I do object to is closing a theatre to build one."



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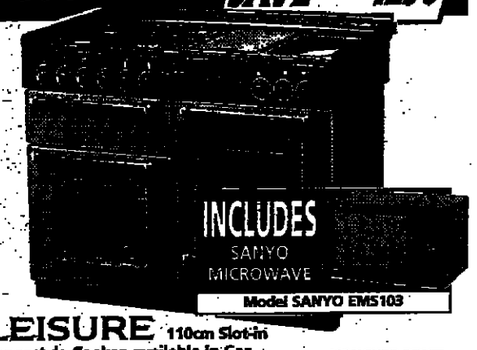
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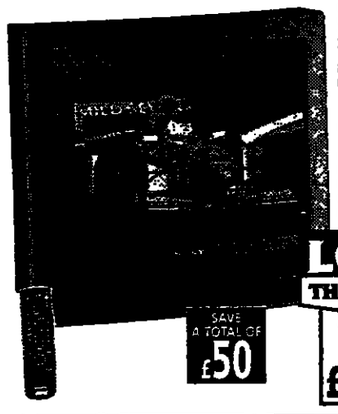
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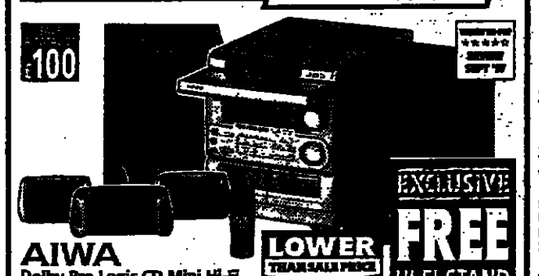


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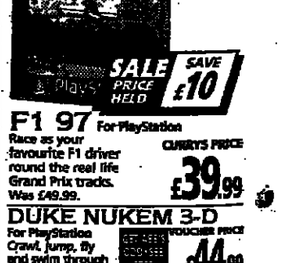
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Families united in grief over terror murders

By Martin Fletcher, Chief Ireland Correspondent

ROMAN Catholics and Protestants came together in an extraordinary display of unity yesterday for the funerals of two lifelong friends, one from each tradition, murdered by loyalist gunmen in a Co Armagh pub on Tuesday.

The entire village of Poyntzpass, and hundreds of outsiders, stood in silence and pouring rain as Damien Trainor, 25, and Philip Allen, 34, were buried at successive funerals and in graveyards so close that they almost touched.

This small farming community had never suffered sectarian violence before, and there was none of the weary resignation with which killings are sometime greeted elsewhere in Northern Ireland.

The roads were shut off and every business closed. Young men wept openly. A single burning candle stood on the doorstep of the bar where the two young men were shot, bouquets of flowers lined the pavement outside, and the bar may now be closed for good.

Mr Trainor was buried first, and Mr Allen's three brothers helped to carry his coffin into the little white Catholic church on Chapel Street, where the family joined the grieving Trainors. "Two families are united in shock sorrow and devastation," said Archbishop Sean Brady, the Catholic Primate of All Ireland.

"The whole community is united in disbelief, horror and revulsion. Now, hopefully, we will all be equally united in our determination to find and accept a seetlement that will put an end, once and for all, to atrocities like that of last Tuesday night."

Mr Trainor was barely buried before Mr Allen's funeral procession was wending its through the ranks of silent mourners lining Railway Street, and this time the Trainors joined Mr Allen's family and his fiancée, Carol Magill, as they walked behind the coffin to the equally overflowing Presbyterian church.

Sam Hutchinson, the Presbyterian Moderator, used the occasion to appeal for the Province to support the peace process.

"We don't want the future of this land to be determined by the Poyntzpass gunmen," he said.

BRIAN LITTLE



The family of Damien Trainor, shot dead by loyalist terrorists on Tuesday, leading the cortège to St Joseph's Church, Poyntzpass

Bulger boys allowed to challenge trial

From Charles Bremner in Brussels

THE two boys who were convicted of murdering James Bulger were granted permission yesterday to challenge their trial and sentencing at the European Court of Human Rights. The decision by the European Commission of Human Rights means British treatment of young offenders could be deemed to breach the European convention.

Lawyers for Robert Thompson and Jon Venables, who are now 14, argue that their trial in February 1993 for killing the two-year-old boy amounted to "inhuman and degrading treatment", and was unfair because they were tried in an adult court.

The commission was told that the boys were too young to understand their trial at Preston Crown Court in November 1993. The public proceedings and intense publicity had made the trial frightening, humiliating and intimidating, the lawyers said.

The boys, from Merseyside, were aged ten when they took James from a shopping centre and battered him to death. There was international criticism of the English practice of trying some juveniles in adult courts. The boys are also challenging Britain's sentencing system, in which their term, or "tariff", is fixed by the Home Secretary. The Law Lords last year ruled last year that Michael Howard, the previous Home Secretary, had acted illegally when he raised the boys' term to 15 years.

At their trial, the judge had sentenced them to an eight-year minimum. This was increased to ten years by Lord Taylor, the former Lord Chief Justice. Jack Straw, the present Home Secretary, has indicated that he could order a reduction in the boys' tariffs.

A court finding against Britain, which could take up to two years, would not affect the boys' convictions, but would force Britain to bring its practices into line with the 1948 European Convention.

David Pannick, QC, for the Government, argued in Strasbourg that the sentence of detention at Her Majesty's pleasure did not constitute inhuman or degrading treatment. The boys were receiving education, training and health care, and had the use of recreational facilities. The nature of the crime, he argued, had made it important to hold a public trial.

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Diana's legacy keeps flag flying at palaces

Public clamour has initiated a change, reports **Daniel McGrory**

THE sight of the Union Jack flying over Buckingham Palace and other royal castles last night was the Queen's public legacy to the memory of Diana, Princess of Wales.

There was a public clamour for the flag to be seen at half-mast during the days before the Princess's funeral last September. Previously, when the Queen was not in residence, the flagpole has been left bare.

After much debate among the Royal Family, and in particular with the Prince of Wales, the Queen agreed that the flag should fly at half-mast from Buckingham Palace as a mark of respect during the Princess's funeral. Last night royal aides admitted: "The death of the Princess of Wales was the catalyst for this change."

Constitutional experts last night described the change as "the nationalisation of the monarchy". David Starkey said it showed that the monarch accepted that her London residence is in effect "a People's Palace".

Key figures in the Royal Family agreed this tradition must change during last month's meeting of the Way Ahead Group at Buckingham Palace. The group is looking for ways to modernise the monarchy and make it more popular.

It was this group that convinced the Queen she should pay income tax and that Buckingham Palace should be opened to the paying public. The Queen was advised by other senior members of her family, notably the Duke of Edinburgh and the Prince of Wales, as well as by leading Palace officials.

She ruled that the Union Jack would fly around the clock when she was not in residence. When she is at the Palace, the Royal Standard will fly as usual. This is never flown at half-mast, as the Sovereign is deemed never to die. Union Jacks at other Royal castles — at Dover and Walmer in Kent, and at Hampton Court Palace — will also now fly for 24 hours a day. At the Palace of Holyroodhouse in Edinburgh, the Royal Arms of Scotland will fly. Curiously, a Union Jack has always flown full-mast at Windsor Castle and the Tower of London when the Queen is away.

There are no flagpoles at St James's Palace and Kensington Palace. Private royal residencies — Balmoral in Scotland, Sandringham in Norfolk, and Clarence House in London — fly personal Royal Standards.

Union Jacks and personal Royal Standards — with the exception of the monarch's — would be flown at half-mast in the event of a royal death.

Lord St John of Fawsley said: "I think this is a very sensible arrangement because it preserves the important protocol that the Royal Standard flies only when the Queen or members of her family are in residence. At the same time it shows that the ordinary life of the nation continues when the Queen is not in residence, by flying the Union flag. It marks an evolution, without breaking with the past."

Lord Blake, the constitutional historian, said: "I think a lot of people misinterpreted the situation over Princess Diana. The new arrangements mean that the tradition stays that the Royal Standard is never at half-mast, but the Union flag can be. I can't see that there is anything in the change to worry even the most silly people."

Most visitors outside Buckingham Palace welcomed the move. Danny King, 56, an engineer and lifelong royalist from Middlesbrough, thought the change was a mark of respect for the Princess. He said: "I think tradition has got to move on. The Royal Family has got to reach out to the young people of today."

Theodora Blachou, 19, a student from northwest London, said: "I think it's important that the Queen is seen to be responding to the people. But I didn't notice the flag, so I wonder if people will realise the change."

GIANT PODS BEAT DRUM FOR BRITAIN

FOUR inflatable silver drums containing the latest in British design, style and technology are to be the new focus for "cool Britannia" which will be seen around the world. The futuristic structure is to be a centrepiece for overseas state visits by the Queen and the Prince of Wales, official tours by Tony Blair, and will be the flagship for Britain and its exports during British trade weeks staged regularly worldwide. But people at home will be able to visit the giant globules, or pods, first. The massive, steel-framed drums are being put up this weekend in Horse Guards Parade. Each structure stands 24ft. and is 48ft wide. The new £1 million British showcase, known as Powerhouse UK, will open its doors for the first time next month when Asian and European leaders attend a two-day meeting in London. It will stay open to the public for two weeks from April 4. Organisers expect some 50,000 visitors.

ADRIAN DENNIS



A Union Jack flying at Buckingham Palace while the Queen was away yesterday

Princess guard is rebuked by judge

FROM ADAM SAGE IN PARIS

A FRENCH judge yesterday warned Trevor Rees-Jones not to divulge any more details in public about the crash which killed Diana, Princess of Wales, and her companion, Dodi Fayed.

Clearly irritated by Mr Rees-Jones's revelations in a tabloid newspaper, the judge heading the inquiry team, Hervé Stéphan, said Mr Rees-Jones should tell him first about anything more he remembered. The bodyguard, the sole survivor of the crash last August, denied that he was told what to say by his employer, Mohamed Al Fayed.

The judge, indignant at Mr Al Fayed's claims that the Princess was murdered, has said he does not expect to see any further revelations in British newspapers. During their previous meetings Mr Rees-Jones insisted he could remember nothing about the accident.

After the 80-minute meeting, Mr Rees-Jones left by a side entrance at the Palais de Justice, leaving his French lawyer to insist that he had not been told what to say. Maitre Christian Curtil said: "He is starting to remember some details of the crash and, as soon as he remembers more, the judge will be the first to know."

Mr Fayed is to be interviewed by Judge Stéphan next week.

Supporters rally to architecture institute

BY DANIEL MCGRORY

SUPPORTERS of the troubled Prince of Wales Institute of Architecture insisted last night that it is not about to close. Several leading figures have resigned and a magazine associated with the institute was scrapped as critics complained that those in charge had betrayed the Prince's ideals.

There were suggestions that, disillusioned with the infighting, the Prince was ready to abandon a project close to his heart. Critics also seized on the recent appointment of Professor Adrian Gale, a modernist, to head the school as evidence of how the think-tank had been hijacked by enemies of the Prince. They have also claimed that too many lawyers, rather than architects, were running the institute.

A source close to the Prince said last night: "This is all absolute nonsense. The institute is about to be reborn, stronger and more focused than ever before."

The plan is devote most energy to the Prince's original plan to concentrate on housing design for the next five years. "That is what the Prince started this institute for, to improve how people lived and we lost sight of that for a while," the source said.

Supporters insist that the problems were caused by the institute trying to do too much. The reason that new appointments were made to the ruling council was to "create a new, unified, financially viable structure".

Details of the new structure and key appointments from leading figures in architecture will be announced shortly. "Another problem was finance. We had to cut off the things that were not our core, like the magazine *Perspectives*, which took money away from our core objective," the source said.

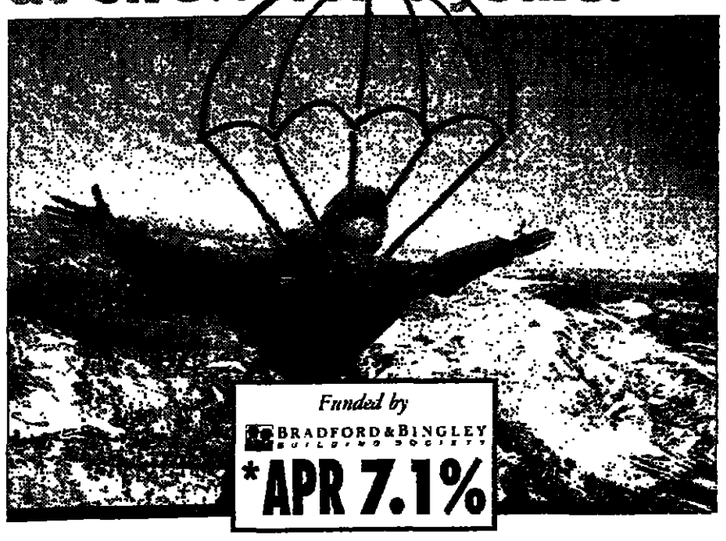
Lady Browne-Wilkinson, the new chairman of the institute's council, said last night: "The Prince remains very enthusiastic about this project, as do I. We have absolute confidence the institute has an exciting future and will now live up to the high aims we always had for it."

Lady Browne-Wilkinson, who is a lawyer, said there was justifiable criticism that not enough architects were filling key posts but she said that would be rectified.

She denied her friendship with Professor Gale, who recently retired from running the Plymouth School of Architecture, had anything to do with his appointment. "I was not even on the selection panel who chose between three very able candidates."

Weekend, page 1

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New blow for countryside as shires bear tax burden

Nicholas Wood and **Mark Henderson** find London gets off lightly in the new round of council tax rises

COUNCIL tax bills for 20 million people in the shires are to rise by twice the level of towns and cities in a new blow to those campaigning for a better deal for the countryside.

An independent survey yesterday showed that the average increases would be 5.5 per cent in London and 7.2 per cent in other metropolitan areas. The average rise in England's 35 shire counties is, however, 11.8 per cent.

The figures, coming only days after an estimated 280,000 people marched in London against the Government's policies on the countryside, brought fresh protests. With the Budget on March 17 expected to push up the price of petrol by 27p a gallon — a move that will disproportionately penalise countryfolk — Tories accused Labour of pursuing a "tax the countryside" agenda.

The Countryside Alliance, which organised last Sunday's rally, complained that the Government was treating the shires unfairly. Conservative leaders said that the increases — which are nearly 20 per cent in some cases — were the biggest in the five years since the council tax replaced the poll tax.

When the top-ups to help pay for for district councils, police and fire services are included, Band D taxpayers in shire counties, for example, will also have to pay an average £120 more.

Conservatives blamed the big rises on changes by Ministers in the method for calculating Government grants to local authorities. They said that the revised formula, designed to help poor areas, had cost the shires a total of £94 million by reducing their allocations for young children, social services, capital spending and debt.

The switch to unitary authorities for many county towns has also drained money away from rural hinterlands. While some London boroughs and unitary authorities have been able to reduce tax bills this year, the lowest rise among the county councils was an above-average 8.1 per cent in Warwickshire and Leicestershire.

John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, predicted an average rise of 7 per cent when he announced levels of Government grant for councils in December.

Devon (19.4 per cent), Northumberland (17.9 per cent), Cheshire (17.5 per cent), Norfolk (15.7 per cent), Durham (15.6 per cent), Essex (14.9 per cent) and Lancashire (14.5 per cent) top the league table of shire increases, up to 6 times the current 3.3 per cent rate of inflation, according to figures compiled by the Local Government Chronicle and The Times. Bills to householders will go out at the end of the month.



Raynsford: defended settlement as fair

Among unitary authorities, the most rural have lost out under the new formula. In Berkshire, where all the councils are unitary, residents of Newbury face an increase double that of neighbouring Slough, more urban in character. A Newbury council spokesman said: "The new formula recognises urban poverty, but not the extra cost of providing rural services."

Tim Yeo, the Shadow Local Government Minister, said he feared that unless Ministers changed the funding formula, people in the shires would suffer a further round of big increases next year.

"What they have done is hold a gun to the head of the shires and say either you whack up council tax by double the rate in the towns or you make drastic cuts in services. These are alarming figures. At around £600 a year for a modest house in the shires, council tax is becoming a very big tax with these double figure increases.

"They are a clear indication that this Government's priority is in the towns and not in the countryside. These rises make a mockery of the Government's claim that it has been listening to the concerns of the countryside."

Peter Chalke, Tory chairman of the County Council Network representing shire authorities, said that Ministers had snubbed the shires during consultations on their new formula. They had met and responded to pressure from leaders of the metropolitan authorities for extra money.

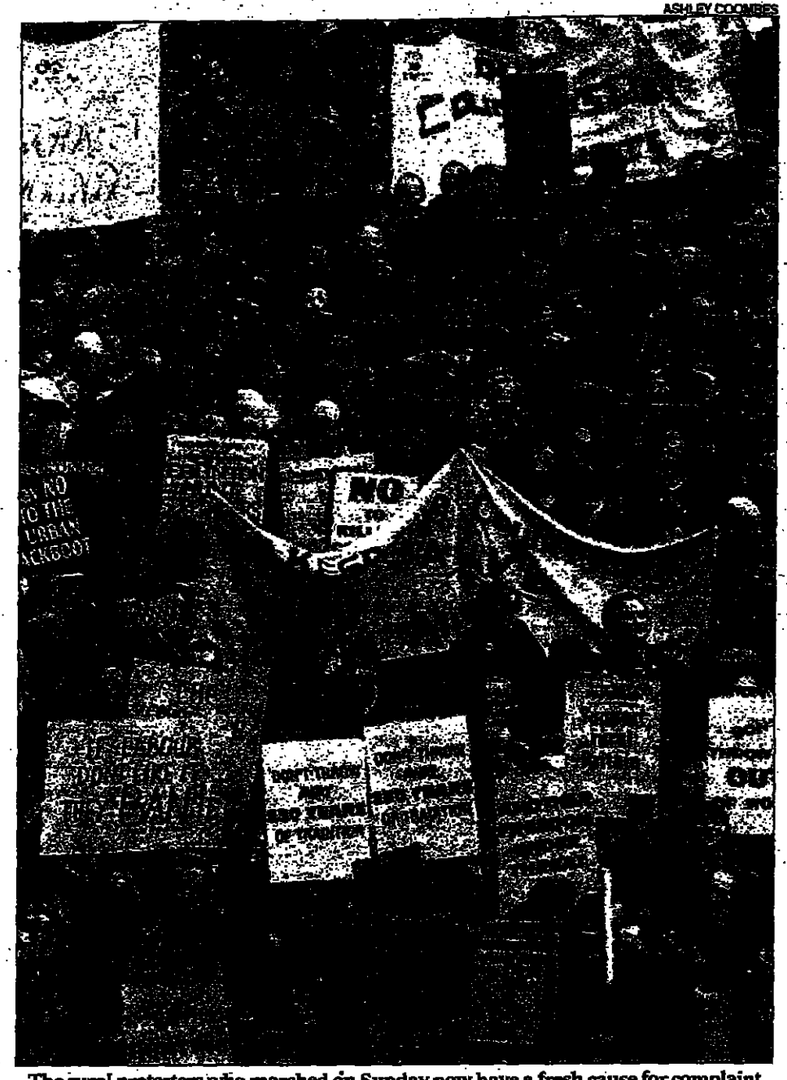
Big losers among the shires included Hampshire, with a cut in its grant of more than £10 million; Kent (£7 million), Norfolk (£8 million), Nottinghamshire (£8 million), Oxfordshire (£8 million), and Suffolk (£4 million). Mr Chalke, leader of the Tory group on Wiltshire County Council, contrasted the 12.3 per cent rise in his area with neighbouring Swindon's increase around the inflation rate of 3.3 per cent.

Nigel Burke of the Countryside Alliance, which organised the Countryside March in London, said he was concerned by the figures. "We have been asking ministers to make sure the funding formula is improved to be fair to the countryside," he said. "This gives us absolutely no confidence they are doing so."

An Environment Minister, Nick Raynsford, said, the finance settlement for rural councils had been a fair one.

"For the first time in four years we have provided an increase for the services delivered by shire districts," he said. "We have treated all local authorities whether rural or urban on a fair basis."

ASHLEY COOMBES



The rural protesters who marched on Sunday now have a fresh cause for complaint

COUNCIL TAX INCREASES, 1998-9

Sources: *Local Government Chronicle*, Association of London Government, *The Times*

COUNTY COUNCILS

County	Band D 1998-99	Rise %
Devon	569	19.4
Northumberland	657	17.9
Cheshire	665	17.5
Norfolk	558	15.7
Durham	634	15.6
Essex	559	14.9
Lancashire	673	14.5
North Yorkshire	538	13.6
Shropshire	555	13.6
Lincolnshire	598	13.3
Kent	553	13.2
Wiltshire	555	12.3
Nottinghamshire	681	12.2
Hertfordshire	529	12.2
Derbyshire	642	11.4
West Sussex	546	11.0
Hampshire	557	10.8
Buckinghamshire	547	10.6
Gloucestershire	537	10.6
Surrey	540	10.6
Oxfordshire	538	10.4
Cambridgshire	519	10.2
Cornwall	536	10.2
Somerset	564	10.2
Staffordshire	529	10.0
Suffolk	540	10.0
Bedfordshire	637	9.9
Northants	539	9.1
Worcestershire*	511	9.0
Cumbria	634	8.9
East Sussex	574	8.7
Dorset	604	8.6
Leicestershire	595	8.1
Warwickshire	596	8.1
AVERAGE		11.8

* Hereford and Worcester is abolished on April 1. It will be replaced by a new Worcestershire County Council and a unitary authority for Herefordshire.

METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCILS

Council	Band D 1998-99	Rise %
Walsall	741	11.9
Wakefield	712	11.8
Barnsley	735	9.8
South Tyneside	838	9.8
Newcastle u Tyne	906	9.1
Sheffield	834	9.0
Leeds	733	8.9
Doncaster	699	8.7
Rotherham	760	8.0
Sunderland	760	8.0
Bolton	845	7.9
Calderdale	837	7.9
Sefton	880	7.9
Knowsley	906	7.6*
Sandwell	800	7.3
Coventry	897	7.0
St Helens	942	6.9*
Dudley	744	6.8
Bradford	761	6.6
Rochdale	821	6.6
Birmingham	846	6.5
Wirral	914	6.5
Solihull	693	6.4
Oldham	865	6.1
Kirklees	843	6.0
Stockport	889	6.0**
Bury	753	5.9
Tameside	862	5.9
Trafford	657	5.9
Gateshead	909	5.8
Manchester	949	5.7
Liverpool	1,172	5.5**
Wolverhampton	914	5.4
Salford	918	5.0
North Tyneside	846	4.6
Wigan	774	3.4
AVERAGE:		7.2

* provisional

** If the council budgets at cap.

LONDON BOROUGH COUNCILS

Council	Band D 1998-99	Rise %
Hillingdon	704	12.2
Bexley	695	11.4*
Sutton	702	10.8
Croydon	692	10.8
Havering	724	10.7*
Kingston u Thames	705	10.1*
Camden	879	9.9
Ealing	643	9.9
Barking & Dagenham	698	9.8
Barnet	728	9.5
Harrow	724	8.2
City of London	533	8.0
Redbridge	696	7.7*
Greenwich	883	7.6
Merton	748	7.6
Westminster	325	6.9
Enfield	680	6.6
Hounslow	730	5.6
Brent	584	5.5*
Southwark	787	5.2
Bromley	610	5.0
Newham	680	4.9
Lewisham	683	3.9
Islington	912	3.7
Haringey	856	3.5
Ken & Chelsea	535	3.0
Rich u Thames	762	2.3
Tower Hamlets	659	2.0
Hackney	797	0.0
Ham & Fulham	790	0.0
Lambeth	647	-1.2
Waltham Forest	814	-1.6 *
Wandsworth	319	-24.5
AVERAGE		5.5

* Provisional

UNITARY COUNCILS

Council	Band D 1998-99	Rise %
Bath and NE Somerset	763	7.8
Blackburn w Darwen	880	5.5*
Blackpool	633	-13.2
Bournemouth	708	14.8
Bracknell Forest	679	18.4
Brightn & Hove	652	8.9
Bristol	932	1.9
Darlington	658	10.2
Derby	671	8.0
E Riding of Yorks	803	6.8
Halton	643	-6.2
Hartlepool	924	4.3
Herefordshire	647	+
Isle of Wight	720	7.8
Isles of Scilly	481	7.5
Kingst'n-u-Hull	757	10.8
Leicester	765	25.4*
Luton	598	8.7
Middlesbrough	741	4.0
Milton Keynes	673	6.2
Medway Towns	634	+
Newbury	692	19.5
N E Lincolnshire	816	5.5
N Lincolnshire	824	X
Somerset	683	9.2
Nottingham	832	3.0
Peterborough	688	13.0
Plymouth	645	-4.9
Poole	674	10.3
Portsmouth	634	5.2
Reading	800	14.9
Redc' & Cleve'lnd	977	6.6
Rutland	870	17.0
Slough	649	9.3
S Glouc	717	4.0
Southend-on-Sea	586	4.3
Southampton	664	10.1
Stockton-on-Tees	802	0.6
Stoke-on-Trent	707	7.6
Swindon	639	4.8
Thurrock	630	-1.8
Torbay	645	7.4
Warrington	688	-4.0
Win & M'denhd	708	12.9
Wokingham	768	15.2
The Wrekin	587	-1.0
York	669	11.1

* provisional

\+ increase not available - new authority

X could not provide information on size of increase

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Up against the wall: Irvine's taste put to test


Irvine: challenged

Peter Foster offers the Lord Chancellor some popular alternatives to handmade wallpaper

THE Lord Chancellor's sumptuous wallpaper was put to the test yesterday against some of the high street brands he disparaged when asked to explain the £650,000 refurbishment bill for his official rooms at Westminster.

The wallpaper industry was incensed when Lord Irvine of Lairg said that cheap wallpapers from DIY stores could not be compared with his handmade reproduction Pugin flock, which costs up to £300 a roll. Terry Langstroth, chairman of the Wallfashion Bureau, which represents members of the wallpaper industry, said that Lord Irvine was wrong if he thought that papers from DIY stores would "collapse after a year or so". He said: "We would be happy to hang our commercially produced paper alongside his considerably more expensive hand-printed product any day."

Cole & Son, makers of the Lord Chancellor's wallpaper, said yesterday that it could last up to 40 or 50 years, perhaps longer. John Davies, a technical specialist at the company, said: "Comparing handcrafted papers with mass-produced ones is the equivalent of comparing a Rolls-Royce to a Mini."

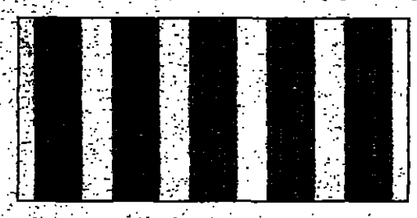
However, Mr Langstroth insisted: "Our members produce papers which can cost under £10 a roll and would last just as long, if not longer, than his. We strongly recommend he tries them." Yesterday *The Times* did just that and, with the help of the Wallfashion Bureau, pitted some leading brands against Lord Irvine's. We employed the four criteria used by the industry to rank their products: scrubbability (how it easily it washes), light-fastness (how quickly it fades), straightness (how well patterns match) and tensile strength (how easily it tears).

Angelica Goodden, page 22
Letters, page 23


Wear and tear: tensile strength was one of the tests



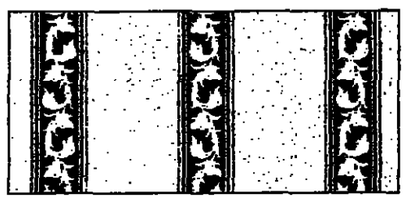
LORD IRVINE'S FLOCK: handmade by Cole & Son, using 150-year-old techniques.
Cost: £300 a roll; £59,000 in total.
Scrubbability: *Nil. Splashes to the furry texture could cause irreparable damage.*
Light-fastness: on an internationally recognised scale of 1 to 8, Lord Irvine's flock scores a creditable 6 or 7, depending on the pigment.
Straightness (pattern consistency): *at a strong disadvantage when compared with machine-manufactured products.*
Tensile strength: measured in g/m², Pugin flock is a true heavyweight at up to 500g/m².



VYMURA READY PASTED VINYL: all-purpose matt paper, should last up to ten years.
Cost: usually £8.99 per roll, but on offer at B&Q for £6.99.
Scrubbability: as washable as wallpaper can be; a sponge, soft brush and drop of washing-up liquid will remove most stains.
Light-fastness: 5 to 6.
Pattern consistency: *machine-produced perfection.*
Tensile strength: at 180g/m², lighter than the flock, but easier for the amateur DIY enthusiast to hang.



VYMURA SAVIO STRIPE: the burden of the Lord Chancellor's high office would surely be eased by this hand-drawn pastel print.
Cost: £5.99; a solid middle-of-the-range option without the added durability of a vinyl paper.
Scrubbability: washable: could provide Lord Irvine with good protection against any accidents at one his many planned cocktail parties. Canapes could be flung against this paper with impunity.
Light-fastness: 5.
Pattern consistency: it matches.
Tensile strength: 180g/m²



GRAHAM & BROWN NON-PASTED VINYL: classic design with gold regency stripe and foliate motif favoured by three-star hotels.
Cost: £7.99 per roll from B&Q; less than £3,000 for the 350 rolls required by Lord Irvine, as opposed to £59,000.
Scrubbability: although a damp cloth will save this from some stains, it falls short of scrubbable.
Light-fastness: 5.
Pattern consistency: spot on.
Tensile strength: 180g/m². A thick, laminated paper which, the manufacturers claim, should last up to 20 years.



COLOROLL CHARISSE STRIPE: Victorian floral print more usually reserved for below stairs.
Cost: £2.99 a roll; bottom of the rack at B&Q, if *that means anything to his lordship.*
Scrubbability: spongeable, but strictly no detergents or the Lord Chancellor may find himself staring at the plasterwork.
Light-fastness: moderate, but still guaranteed to last for several years before fading.
Pattern consistency: match the batch numbers.
Tensile strength: At 120g/m², one of the thinnest on the market, but still good for five years.

Passing on your ticket may be a criminal offence

BY A CORRESPONDENT

THREE people who were caught reselling London Underground tickets lost their appeals yesterday in a case that may have wide implications for anyone who passes on a ticket.

In dismissing the men's challenge to theft convictions, Lord Justice Mantell in the Court of Appeal stated: "This appeal could have implications for all ticket touts and even for the ordinary motorist who passes on the benefit of an unexpired parking ticket."

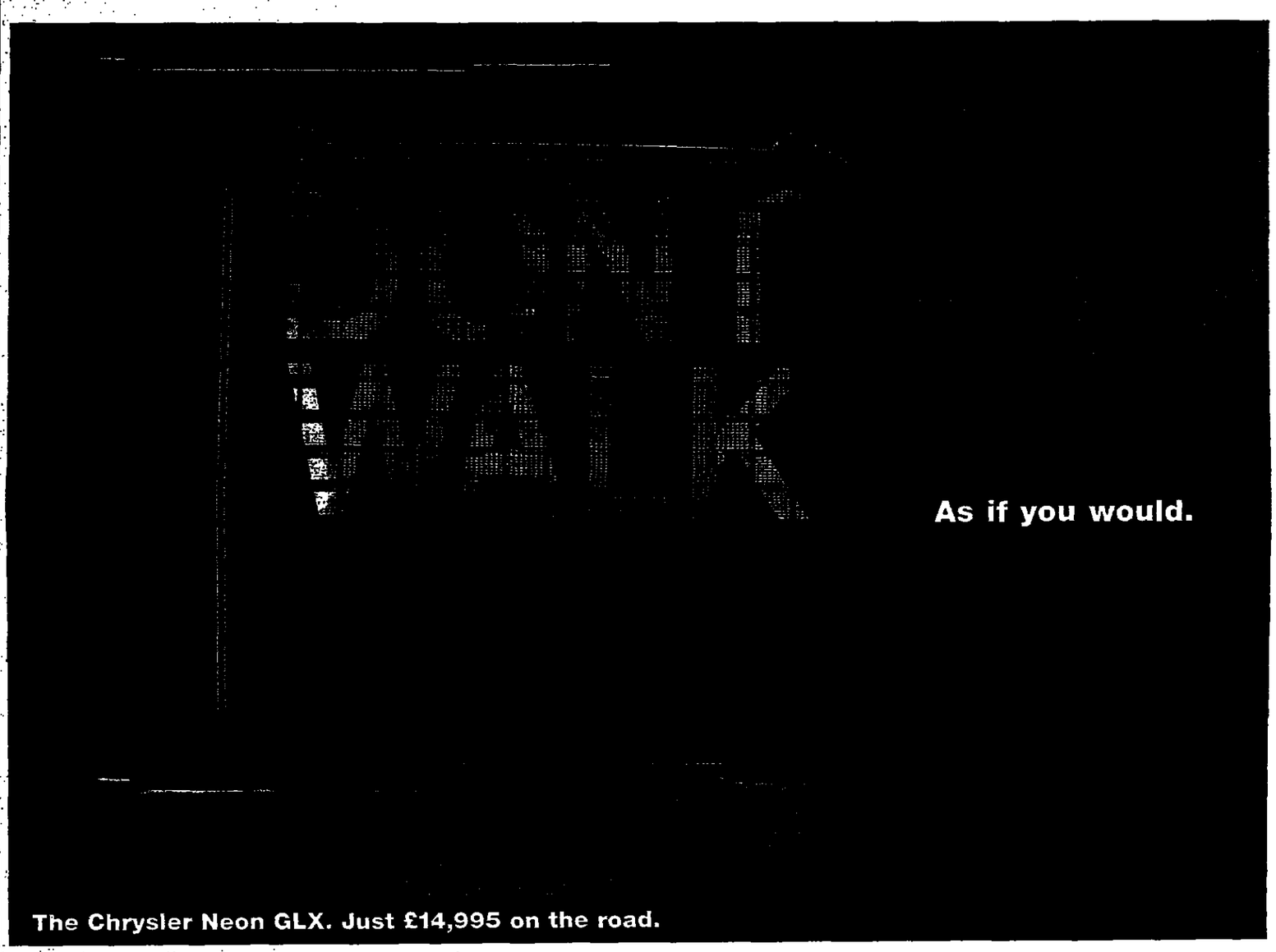
The judge, sitting with Mrs Justice Ebsworth and Judge Martin Stephens, QC, said that in late 1996 each of the appellants — Adrian Marshall, Robert Coombes and Birol Eren — was recorded on videotape at Victoria station obtaining Underground tickets or travel cards from people passing through the barriers, which they then resold cut-price. "By doing so, it is accepted that each of them was committing a bylaw offence. However, they were each separately indicted for theft."

London Underground said the men's action deprived it of revenue. Lord Justice Mantell said the matter came before Judge Hardy in March last year, who ruled that all the components of theft were present, save for the question of dishonesty, which was a matter for the jury. The appellants later pleaded guilty. Marshall asked for 78 other offences to be taken into consideration, Coombes for 59 and Eren for 47. Marshall and Coombes were placed on probation and Eren was ordered to serve 40 hours' community service.

The men took their case to the Court of Appeal, claiming that Judge Hardy's ruling was erroneous. The three claimed there was "no evidence of an intention to permanently deprive" London Underground — they had intended either to return the tickets directly to London Underground or to do so through the third-party buyer.

Dismissing the appeals, Lord Justice Mantell stated: "The appellants by their pleas having acknowledged that they were acting dishonestly it seems to us that there is no reason to consider the convictions unsafe."

London Underground loses £30 million a year through fraud, including the revenue that is lost through ticket touting.



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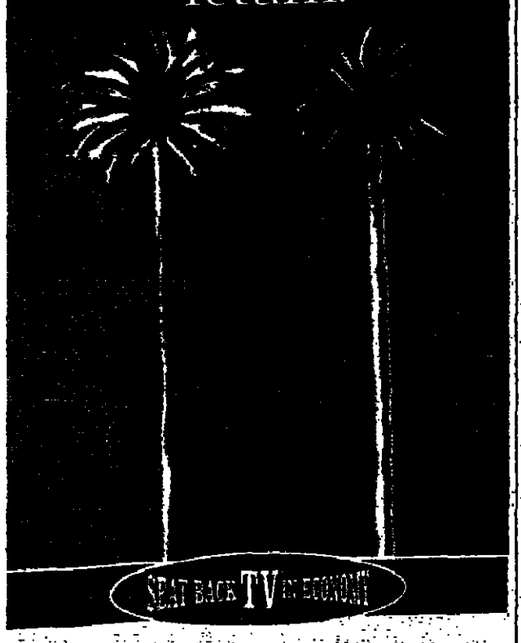
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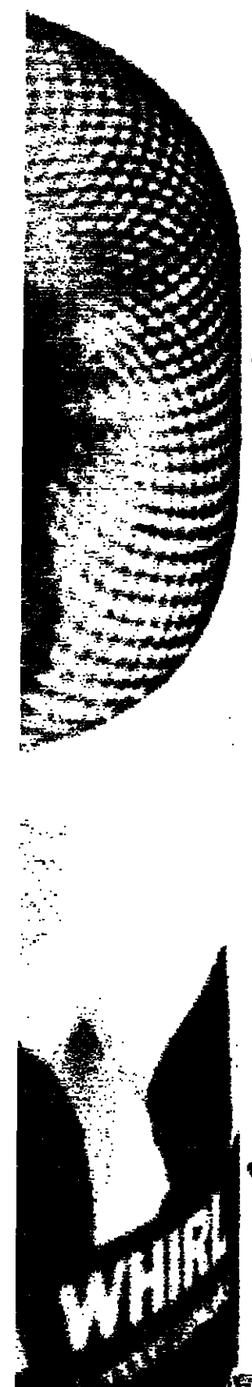
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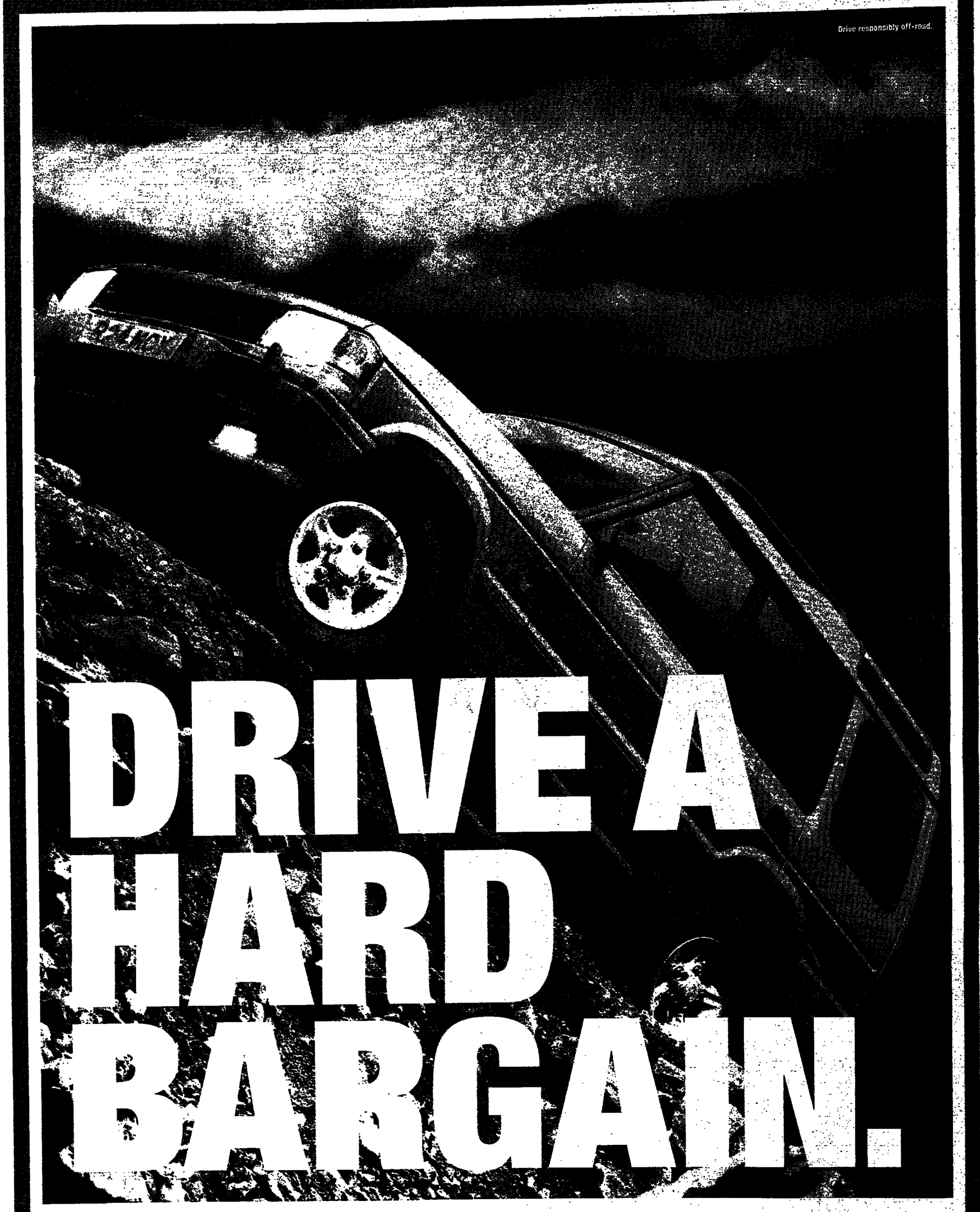


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Labour of love shields turtles from hunters



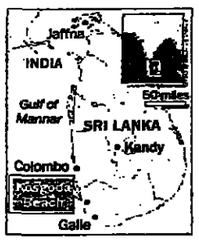
Christopher Thomas reports from Kosgoda Beach on a fight to ensure creatures who live 200 years survive the first days

A PALM-COVERED beach in southwestern Sri Lanka sees a daily wonder. From here, more than one million newborn turtles have scampered across the sand into the Indian Ocean over the past 18 years, saved by the dedication of one man.

Chandrasiri Abbrew, 34, fights single-handed to save the loggerheads and greenbacks he loves, and little by little he is winning. Turtles once filled the local waters but were almost wiped out by the plunder of their eggs, a delicacy beloved by Sri Lankans, even though eating them is illegal.

Now, when he dives through the coral off the small stretch of beach he owns, Mr Abbrew sees the turtles in increasing abundance. Many recognise his call as he dives into the water and tolerate his touch. Some approach him in a gesture of welcome: theirs is a remarkable affinity.

Rosie, a six-year-old albino who cannot be released because other turtles would attack her, rises out of her tank to nuzzle him when she hears his voice. He lifts her over his head, her flippers flapping in delight. She snaps at anybody else who touches her, but Mr Abbrew sends her into a frenzy of excitement. Several nights a week turtles come ashore to lay their eggs — more than 100 each — and bury them in two feet of sand. Mr Abbrew paces the beach, watching the ritual and keeping guard over the eggs until daybreak, when he digs them up and carries them in buckets to a wired-in enclosure where people cannot get at them.



There they are reburied and allowed to hatch, and the moment the turtles clamber out of the sand they are transferred to tanks for three days — enough time to gain strength and for their shells to toughen so they can resist leeches, one of their biggest enemies in the first days of life.

Left untended on the beach, perhaps no more than 1 per cent of hatched turtles would survive the dash to the sea because of attacks by birds and cats. And almost no eggs would escape people who dig them up to sell.

This way, they all get to the surf: only then does the natural slaughter begin, but plainly a good number survive. "There has been a distinct increase in the turtle population over the years," Mr Abbrew says, "perhaps as much as 40 per cent." He tags some of them and watches them grow to adulthood, his log books filled with detailed accounts of their habits and relationships.

In one of the concrete tanks in his small complex there is a young turtle with an eye missing — Mr Abbrew removed it, stitched the wound, and thus saved its life. He found it dying from injuries inflicted by a cat trying to bite its tiny head off, and it dashes to the side of the tank towards him when it hears his approaching voice.

He looks after several turtles blinded by cars. In 1993 he found the largest turtle he has ever seen — a leatherback nearly 13ft long, which had been injured by a ship. He nursed it and returned it to the sea.

His late father started the sanctuary, known as the Sea Turtles' Research Centre, at Kosgoda Beach south of Colombo. He bought a small stretch of the beach with money supplied by Victor Hasselblad, the late owner of the Swedish camera company, who left $3,000 (£1,870) in his will after hearing about the project from his secretary, who discovered it on a holiday trip.

Its sole income comes from a small gift shop and a tea room, and a 50p charge to the few tourists who happen by. Sitting in the tea room, Mr Abbrew leapt up to remove a biting ant from the leg of a foreign visitor, carrying it gently by a leg and depositing it carefully on the ground outside. "No need to kill it," he said. "No need at all." This passion for conservation consumes his every day. He even buys turtle eggs from people who would otherwise sell them to local shops, paying them slightly more than the shop price of 2p each — an expensive delicacy. He loves diving through the coral with turtles he has released into the ocean, and plays with them regularly. "I ride on their backs. It's fun to get a free ride," he laughs.

Hawksbill turtles are especially rare in Sri Lanka. For thousands of years they have been part of the reef ecosystem but were hunted almost to extinction for the scales of their shells, used for "tortoiseshell" combs.

"A turtle shell can sell for 4,000 rupees (£40) a kilo, and an adult shell weighs around eight kilos," Mr Abbrew says. "Turtle-hunting is still quite common off the east and west coasts. A turtle can live for 200 years and anybody who kills one deserves ten years in jail."

GEMUNU AMARASINGHE / AP



Chandrasiri Abbrew on the beach with Rosie. The albino turtle rises out of her tank to nuzzle him at the sound of his voice but snaps at anyone else

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THE SUNDAY TIMES

THE BOY WHO SAID TOO MUCH



Who was the schoolboy who triggered Hitler's hatred of the Jews? **Kimberley Cornish** believes one of the great thinkers of the 20th century not only prompted Hitler's anti-Semitism but also seriously damaged Britain in his subsequent desperate efforts to destroy the Führer

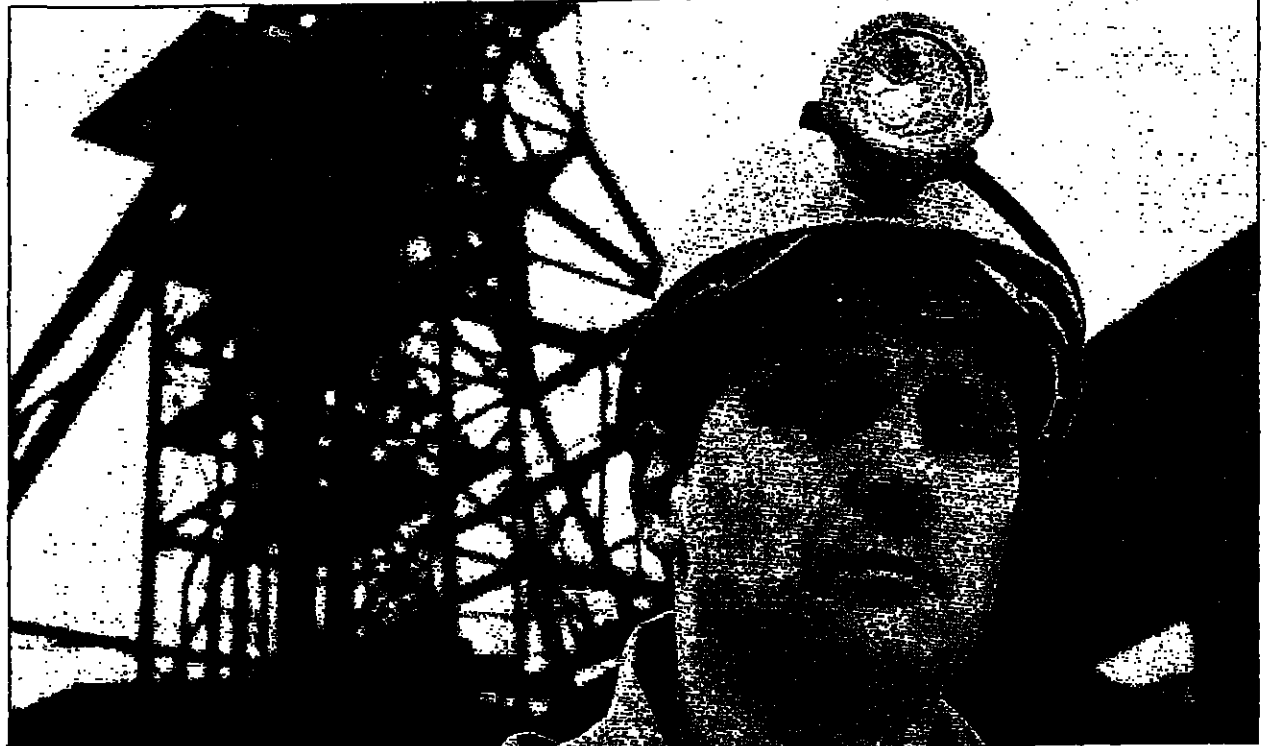
Read these astonishing findings in News Review tomorrow

THE SUNDAY TIMES IS THE SUNDAY PAPERS

The end of hope as last tin mine in Europe closes

Philip Delves Broughton sees the end of 3,000 years of tradition in Cornwall

SIMON BURT



Mark Kaczmarek, a shop steward, at South Crufty mine in Cornwall, which closed yesterday after 400 years

THREE thousand years of tin mining in Cornwall ended at lunchtime yesterday when the last shift emerged, filthy and tired, from South Crofty mine near Redruth. It was the last tin mine in Europe.

Neither the thin drizzle nor the fierce wind blowing around this granite outcrop could erase the fear and disappointment on the faces of the miners: fear of unemployment; *disappointment in* a government which refused to bail them out and in a management team they feel has betrayed them.

"It is not just the loss of a job," said Alan Buckley, Crofty's historian and a former miner. "It's the loss of a way of life."

There has been mining at South Crofty since the 16th century. Well before that, however, Cornwall was synonymous with tin. The early classical geographers, such as Strabo and Pythias, referred to Britain as the tin land. The silver cross on the black background in Cornwall's flag represents tin against the black rock of the mines.

In the 19th century, 50,000 to 60,000 Cornishmen worked down the tin mines, and as little as 15 years ago there were 20,000. In 1985, however, the International Tin Agreement collapsed, leading to plummeting tin prices. The closure of South Crofty ultimately came down to a basic equation: it cost £3,500 to produce a tonne of tin which could then sell for only £3,300.

In January a rescue package put together by David Giddings, *managing director* of South Crofty, was rejected by the Department of Trade and Industry, which led to yesterday's closure.

Paul Bray, 44, the mine captain, said the men would miss the hard physical work: "The tin miners are like athletes. They are used to going for it every day. To suddenly stop is a hell of a change. Filling shelves at Tesco is no comparison."

Mr Giddings agreed: "It is macho, hard work which gives the men pride and an *esprit de corps*." That spirit, however, is currently hostile towards Mr Giddings. On February 27 he paid a Canadian company £170,000 for a majority shareholding in South Crofty. The miners found out about this by accident on Wednesday through the Internet. Mark Kaczmarek, the senior shop steward and a miner until a rock tore a hole the size of a letterbox in his shoulder six months ago, said: "Today has gone from being one of the saddest to one of the bitterest days."

Mr Giddings said the share purchase was a private matter and that the inability of the mine to make money did not mean that he should be prevented from trying to make a go of developing the land and setting up a mining consultancy on the site.

Candy Atherton, the Labour MP for Falmouth and Camborne, visited South Crofty as the first shift went down early yesterday morning. Among the miners she has never been forgiven for asking, "Is this a silver mine?" during a visit in the general election campaign. "She even asked us if we were in the NUM," said Mr Kaczmarek dismissively. "She thought we were coal miners."

Today, *tin miners* and their families from across Cornwall will be marching from Camborne to Redruth, past South Crofty, in celebration of 3,000 years of Cornish tin mining. When Alan Buckley, who worked for more than a quarter of a century down the mines, asked Mr Giddings, if he would be marching, he said: "No. I don't want to go to a funeral."

"The funeral is today," replied Mr Buckley. "Tomorrow is a celebration."

Yet in two weeks, the lifts will be hoisted for the last time, the pumps will be turned off and the last tin mine in Europe will be left to flood.

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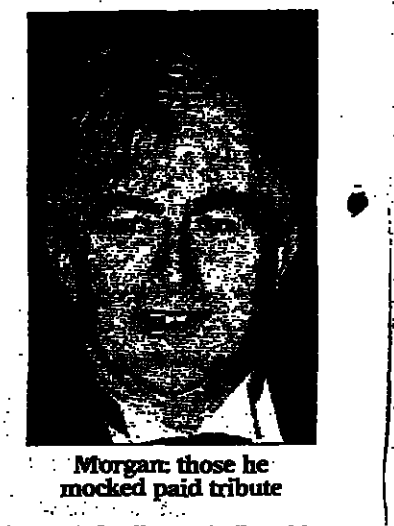
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Presidents lead the farewells to Father Ted

By Audrey Magee



Morgan: those he mocked paid tribute

THE Irish President, Mary McAleese, and her predecessor, Mary Robinson, joined more than 2,000 mourners in Dublin yesterday at the funeral of Dermot Morgan, the comedian and actor best known for playing Father Ted in the television series.

Politicians, artists and comedians from across Ireland gathered in the Roman Catholic Church in Mount Merrion, where Morgan grew up. Even those he ridiculed turned out to pay their respects, including Mary Harney, the Deputy Prime Minister.

The clergy, often embarrassed by Morgan's satire, were represented in force at the Church of St Therese. Five priests celebrated the funeral Mass, led by Father Michael Paul Gallagher, Morgan's former university tutor, who confessed from the altar to having given Morgan his first clerical collar.

Father Gallagher thanked Morgan for the memories: "I remember both his huge imaginative energy and also his shy fragility at times, his intensity and aggression as an artist and his tenderness as a family man and friend."

Father Gallagher thanked Mrs McAleese for attending the funeral and acting as the symbol for the thousands of people "who are feeling a loss as if of a personal friend, though they never met him". He said the President's presence was "a fitting symbol that this country has lost a comic genius, who was widely loved — even if for some people he was hard to take. It was part of his vocation to be hard to take at times." Morgan's family, including his three sons, Fiona Clarke, his partner, and Suzanne Gormatz, his estranged wife, sat together at the front of the church. His sons Ben, 4, Bobby, 16, and Don, 19, offered gifts to the altar, including Morgan's pink football shirt.

The older sons read *O Captain! My Captain!* by Walt Whitman and *The Road Not Taken* by Robert Frost. Don said he hoped his father, who died on Sunday, was sitting with a pint of Guinness and had found Heaven in Dohney and Nesbitt's, a Dublin pub.

The cast of *Father Ted*, the successful Channel 4 series about three Irish Catholic priests and their housekeeper, also attended.

At the invitation of Ms Clarke, Chris de Burgh sang *Song of Paradise*. The rest of the music was provided by the Vard Sisters, a choral group hoping to represent Ireland at this year's Eurovision song contest.

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Youngman: joker king

Laughing all the way to the grave

THE friends of Henny Youngman never laughed harder than they did at his funeral. The British-born "King of One-Liners" — the Woody Allen of his day — was laid to rest with wisecracks worthy of his heyday in New York's "Borscht Belt". A guest at the memorial recalled how, during a visit to the ballet, Youngman had been shocked to see dancers on pointed toes. "Why didn't they just hire taller girls?" he asked. At 80 jokes in a 15-minute performance, he calculated that Youngman had provided 3.25 billion laughs during 70 years of appearing in comedy clubs.

Feminist tide of hostility to Hughes is turning



JAMES BONE'S NEW YORK

IT TAKES a brave man to defend Ted Hughes in America. Britain's Poet Laureate has been so reviled by American feminists for his abandonment of Sylvia Plath that one once wrote a poem accusing him of killing her. So it was quite a surprise that Al Alvarez, an old friend, dared to venture into the lionesses' den.

Alvarez, a poet and critic who angered Hughes by telling the couple's story in *The Savage God* a quarter of a century ago, accepted an invitation from the Academy of American Poets to appear at a symposium in New York to discuss the publication of Hughes's *Birthday Letters*. It was the first opportunity to gauge popular American reaction to Hughes's poems about the failed marriage that ended in Plath's suicide.

"I expected a feminist lynch mob," Alvarez confessed.

The panel at the Cooper Union art school in Greenwich Village seemed predictably stacked against him. Of the six literati on stage, four were American women, while the only other man was another British poet, Michael Hofmann. The female panelists called Hughes's works self-justifying "agenda poetry", "motivated", or "like a lawyer's brief" for his defence.

"Oh, for Christ's sake, you can feel the grief!" the feisty Alvarez interjected on the Poet Laureate's behalf. "The poems are very sad." His assertion that Plath took the easy way out provoked hisses.

But Alvarez won the day with a convincing vindication of Hughes, arguing that he had helped Plath to find her poet's voice and had been left to suffer the consequences.

The tide that flowed so strongly against Hughes in America for so many years is clearly now turning. *Birthday Letters* has hit the bestseller lists, sometimes as fiction and sometimes as non-fiction. So far, there have been four printings totalling more than 100,000 copies, thought to be a record for a book of new poetry.

☐ *Richard Branson stoops to conquer. The British tycoon donned a chauffeur's uniform and a fetching peaked cap to drive a Virgin Airways customer to Newark airport. Mr Branson was publicising the airline's free limousine offer.*

Connery's master stroke

SEAN CONNERY'S connection to *Art* is a family affair. The actor is co-producing a Broadway version of Yasmina Reza's hit play (still on at Wyndhams in the West End) about a group of friends who squabble over a piece of white-on-white abstract art that one of them has bought. Connery's French wife, Micheline, persuaded him to acquire the rights after seeing it in its original version in Paris. The first-night party this week was held at Sotheby's, where the couple's son, Stephane Cosman-Connery, is senior vice-president for Impressionist and 20th-century art.

MARZENA POGORZALY



Alvarez: ventured into lionesses' den to defend Poet Laureate

Bad news for the bouncers

THOSE trapped on the wrong side of the velvet cord might consider signing up for an evening course now on offer in New York: Gate-Crashing 101. "Enjoy gourmet cuisine — for free!" the brochure proclaims.

Howard Girsky, a reporter on a local newspaper, schools his students in the fine art of conning doormen, eluding bouncers and getting on the A-list at movie premieres, Broadway openings and the hottest parties.

"I have been doing it for 40 years," he says. "The first party I crashed was for Jack and Jacqueline Kennedy when Jack was running for President, and I met all the celebrities and Hollywood stars. I realised that was something that could be repeated."

☐ *New Yorkers can have the most deplorable manners even when they are invited: a French friend who spent two days cooking for a dinner party says one American guest apologised that he had to leave before the meal was served — and asked for a "doggy bag".*

Ex-Marine leads UN arms team on Iraq site visits

FROM MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN NICOSIA

SCOTT RITTER, a controversial American weapons inspector vilified by Baghdad as a CIA spy, carried out a series of "surprise" inspections in Iraq yesterday and received full co-operation, the official Iraqi News Agency said.

A leading Arabic newspaper said Richard Butler, the chief United Nations weapons inspector, had sent Mr Ritter back without forewarning Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary-General, who brokered the accord that averted war in the Gulf.

If so, Mr Butler was probably underlining the authority of the UN Special Commission (Unscom) on disarming Iraq. But *al-Hayat*, a London-based daily, quoted a diplomat at the UN who wondered whether Mr Butler was trying to spark a crisis to "torpedo" the accord.

A UN spokesmen said Mr Ritter's 50-strong team would not attempt to enter any of the eight presidential compounds that had been at the heart of the dispute. His last mission in January was cut short when Baghdad blocked his work, claiming his team was dominated by Americans and Britons who were working to prolong trade sanctions against Iraq. UN sources said he had been investigating reports that Iraq had used Shia Muslim prisoners as guinea pigs to test its outlawed biological weapons.

Iraq has insisted repeatedly that it will honour the accord which gives weapons inspectors unrestricted access to all sites. America, which has maintained a powerful armada in the Gulf, has threatened immediate punitive air strikes if Baghdad obstructs the work of Unscom.

Mr Ritter, a former Marine major who served in the Gulf War in 1991, returned to his Baghdad headquarters after nearly ten hours of work, witnesses said. He and his team ignored questions about their site inspections.



Ritter: served with US forces in Gulf War

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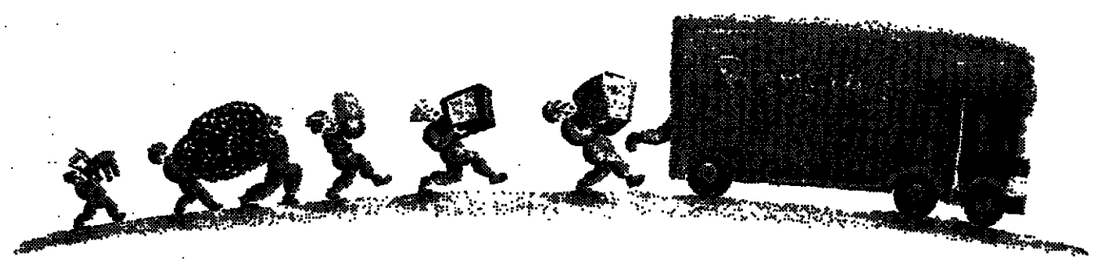
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Suharto defies warnings and keeps brake on reforms

From David Watts in Jakarta

PRESIDENT SUHARTO last night remained unwilling to carry through International Monetary Fund reforms in Indonesia, despite a letter from Tony Blair and an American warning about the dangers of a possible coup by young officers.

The coup warning was contained in a letter that Walter Mondale, the former American Vice-President, handed to President Suharto during an exchange earlier this week. Mr Mondale had been sent by President Clinton to urge the reforms on the Indonesian leader before disaster overtakes the economy of the world's fourth most populous country.

Though the President has signed an official agreement which should lead to changes allowing IMF help to be made available, in several cases the reforms were later overturned or restrictions reintroduced in a new guise. The economy is grinding to a halt with a million people thrown out of work since the crisis began and the prospect of greater hardship.

Derek Fatchett, Minister of State at the Foreign Office, followed up the Mondale mission by handing over a letter from Mr Blair, writing in his capacity as European Union president. Mr Fatchett said he thought President Suharto had understood the need to follow the IMF programme.

With rumours that reductions in the number of civil servants and voluntary pay cuts by the army might be the latest ploys to avoid the inevitable overhaul of the system which favours relatives of the President and crony businessmen, the exchange rate for the rupiah against the dollar careered up and down during the day. At one point it hit an extraordinary 12,000 to the dollar, but ended the day at 10,300.

In the countryside things are becoming more desperate: firms cannot pay for basic imports, and even flour used in the manufacture of noodle dishes is prohibitively expensive.

In reality, it appears that former General Suharto has already moved to head off the possibility of a coup by young officers in the army. His son-in-law, Lieutenant-General Prabowo Subianto, was recently promoted to that rank and placed in charge of the army's strategic reserve — the post from which Mr Suharto launched himself into power 32 years ago.

There are estimated to be 80,000 troops keeping tight control of Jakarta in the run-up to the presidential elections next week, when President Suharto is expected to be elected for a seventh five-year term by the 1,000-member People's Consultative Assembly.

NATALIE BEHRING / REUTERS



Sleeping partners: delegates lose the thread of a speech at China's National People's Congress yesterday

Beijing takes an axe to bureaucracy

From James Pringle in Beijing

UNDERSCORING concern over East Asia's parlous financial situation, China announced yesterday that it was slashing its ministries and axing half its top civil servants. In doing so, it admitted that the number of redundant official personnel was "too great for the state to support".

Liu Zhongli, the Finance Minister, told the second day's session of China's parliament, the National People's Congress, that bad debts in the state-owned commercial banks and financial institutions held economic risks. Mr Liu emphasised Beijing's commitment to slim down its huge bureaucracy, proposing a 1998 budget with a deficit of 10 billion yuan (£730 million), 17 per cent smaller than last year. "We must downsize state bodies, shrink payrolls, reduce the number of personnel supported by state coffers and economise on expenditures," he said. The plan calls for 15 ministry-level bodies to be scrapped and four new super-ministries to be created. The streamlining scheme cuts the number of top organisations under the Cabinet from 40 to 29.

As the key parliamentary session continued, a protester tried to unravel a banner and shout slogans in Tiananmen Square, but he was quickly bundled into a van by police and driven off. Security in the square is, with so many laid-off workers about, more than usually tight for a parliamentary session.

Meanwhile, Chen Jinhua, the minister in charge of the State Planning Commission, admitted that the financial crisis that began in Asia in the second half of last year had had a great impact on the economies of China and other countries and is causing concern.

No figure has been given for the number of civil servants to be lost, but a report from Luo Gan, Cabinet Secretary-General, said that half of the current higher-level civil service must go by the end of the year.

WORLD IN BRIEF

Yeltsin vows to end ban on land sales

Moscow: President Yeltsin yesterday promised millions of Russian peasants that they would soon be able to own land after 80 years of state monopoly on ownership (Richard Beeston writes). Speaking a day after the the city of Balakovo embarked on land sales in defiance of parliament, the Russian leader said that the time had arrived to allow land to be bought and sold by individuals. "I will fight to the end," said the Kremlin leader, in the latest round of a long and bitter ideological dispute.

Despite the collapse of communism six years ago and the subsequent economic reforms, which included the privatisation of state businesses, communists and other hardliners remain opposed to land reform and have blocked a proposed new Land Code.

Plea for kidnapped Britons

Moscow: Chechnya's top Islamic official yesterday appealed to the kidnappers of two British aid workers seized in the separatist republic to release the captives. In a television appearance, Mufti Akhmed-Khodzha Kadyrov also urged Chechens to assist authorities in the search for Camilla Carr, 40, and Jon James, 37, abducted on July 4 from their home in the capital, Grozny. Both worked in a children's centre. *(AP)*

Airing for Libya sanctions

New York: The UN Security Council is to hold a full public debate on sanctions imposed on Libya in 1992 in response to its refusal to hand over two suspects in the Lockerbie bombing. The sanctions are reviewed behind closed doors every 120 days. The decision to hold a public meeting on March 20 was made in response to a ruling by the International Court of Justice in The Hague. *(Reuters)*

Police clear newly-weds



Karachi: Pakistani police have exonerated a couple after their secret marriage triggered ethnic violence, including an attack which left the husband with multiple bullet wounds. Investigators said Riffat Afridi, of the Pashtun ethnic group, was not abducted by her husband, Kanwar Ahsan, right, a Mohajir. Pashtuns staged violent protests after the woman's parents claimed that their daughter had been abducted. *(AFP)*

Four die in lottery shooting

Newington, Connecticut: A disgruntled employee shot dead three workers at the headquarters of the Connecticut state lottery yesterday, and injured another whom he chased into the car park before shooting himself in the head. He died later in hospital in Hartford, the state capital. A union official said that the gunman, 35, was upset over a grievance with the lottery. His identity was not disclosed. *(AP)*

Composer waltzes to fame



Lyons: A waltz by a forgotten French composer will reap his descendants some of the profits from the blockbuster film *Titanic*. François-Joseph Popy, known as Francis Popy, is credited on the film. He wrote *Le Sphinx* in 1910, and the waltz is played in the movie as the ship sinks. His grandson, Gérard, 46, said: "It's a nice surprise, but it's not so much the money that interests us as Francis Popy's fame." *(AFP)*

Biter given taste of the boot

Sofia: A Georgian salesman who bit a Bulgarian policeman on the hand during a routine document check was locked in the boot of a police car. The Georgian and a female compatriot were taken to the Danube port of Vidin and released after being fined for rude behaviour, refusing to obey orders and not having a car ownership certificate. *(Reuters)*

Zimbabwe yields on farm grab

From Jan Raath in Harare

THE ZIMBABWE Government has been forced again to yield to pressure from the Western donor community with a public volte-face on President Mugabe's plans for a radical illegal seizure of white-owned farmland.

Kumbirai Kangai, the Agriculture Minister, told a crowded meeting of senior Western diplomats that farmers would be fully compensated for confiscated land; that no productive land would be seized; and that land reform would be carried out according to the country's law, a briefing by the United Nations Development Programme made clear.

If the Government adheres to its promises, Western diplomats say, it will have to jettison nearly all of a list of 1,471 farms designated in late November for compulsory acquisition by the State for redistribution among blacks.

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Tree crusader claims moral high ground

An eco-warrior is defying loggers with her occupation of a giant redwood, Giles Whittell reports

HER view is astounding. Her winter has been terrifying. Her lavatory is a bucket on a rope. Julia "Butterfly" Hill has spent the past 86 days perched on a plywood platform 180ft up in the branches of an ancient redwood tree. Her object is to save the 1,000-year-old giant from logging, but at times her chief worry has been how to stay alive.

Ms Hill, 24, could not have chosen a more brutal winter to spend in a treehouse. As the worst storms in memory pounded the northern Californian coast last month she wrapped herself in a torn tarpaulin, clung to the swaying branches and prayed. "I figured if I was going to get blown out of a redwood tree and die, the least I could do was put in a good word for everyone," she said this week by cellphone.

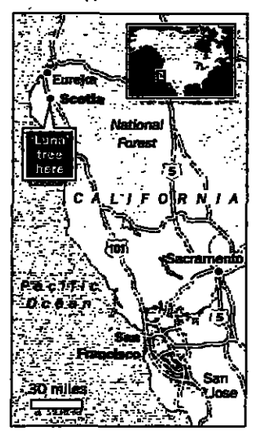
The latest heroine of America's environmental movement is a trespasser and a nuisance for the Pacific Lumber Company, whose headquarters she can see from her eyrie high above the logging town of Scotia, 200 miles north of San Francisco. Part of the Maxxam Corporation, a Texan conglomerate, Pacific Lumber owns the largest stands of privately owned ancient redwoods in the world. Despite a draft conservation agreement, it has announced plans to fell many of the trees. The dense wood from each redwood can fetch up to $1 million (£600,000).

The largest redwoods in the company's Headwaters Forest north of Scotia are thought to be at least as old as Christianity, while the tree Ms Hill calls home, named Luna after a full moon that illuminated the building of her platform last October, may have sprouted at the time of the Norman Conquest.

Pacific Lumber, which insists Luna is barely 200 years old, has tried to force the dauntless tree-sitter to the ground with foghorns, floodlights and even helicopters, according to Earth First, a radical environmental group. "We are in the lumber business and we would like to be able to harvest and replant our forest and make our lumber," a company spokeswoman said recently. "That's what we do."

Such protests have put Scotia and nearby towns in the front line of a ten-year battle between loggers and activists over the fate of the surviving redwoods. Locals have grown used to an annual influx of protesters, who last year made headlines when police daubed pepper spray directly on to their eyes for invading a politician's office.

Ms Hill's marathon is a first, however. As she begins her fourth month in the forest canopy, her platform has evolved into a cross between a homeless shelter and a mountaineering base camp. Ragged tarpaulins provide token protection from winds that have brought hail, sleet and, last month, 12 days of solid rain. Her only creature comforts, sometimes in sub-zero temperatures, are a sleeping bag, propane camping stove and the cellphone.



Personal hygiene is awkward. "My lavatory consists of a funnel with a hose attached, leading to a bucket," she explained. Ms Hill has not changed her clothes since before Christmas.

Visitors have found her fragrant enough, however, and have often stayed for vegetarian meals which Ms Hill perfected as a restaurateur in Jonesboro, Arkansas. She first encountered California's redwoods on a hiking trip last year.

She is convinced the tree has spoken reassuringly to her in her direst moments. For all its New Age fuzziness, her protest has refocused national attention on what many consider an egregious threat to an irreplaceable resource.

Whether it will save the tree remains unclear. Despite a disastrous landslide two years ago blamed on clear-cutting, Pacific Lumber continues to remove timber from the area. Ms Hill's consolations are views of snow-capped mountains and the Pacific, and the slaying of an inner demon. Up to a few months ago, she was afraid of heights.



Julia Hill perches in the redwood where she has lived for the past three months

Musical fiasco shatters dream team

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

THE costly collaboration between a world-famous pop star, a Nobel Prize-winning poet and America's leading avant-garde choreographer has produced Broadway's biggest flop.

Capeman, with a score by Paul Simon, lyrics by Derek Walcott and direction and choreography by Mark Morris, has come crashing down to earth with the announcement that the $11 million (£6.7 million) musical will close at the end of the month after just 59 previews and 69 regular performances. The tale, about the redemption of a real-life Latino gang member who killed two teenagers in a New York playground, bombed with the critics. They praised Simon's music, but Walcott's libretto was found wanting, and Morris's first attempt to direct on Broadway failed to impress. There was added controversy over whether a convicted double-murderer was an appropriate hero for a musical. Families of the two victims and their supporters picketed the show to protest against Simon's glorification of the cape-wearing hoodlum Salvador Agron.

Clinton turns to old foe for spiritual strength



Jackson: sacred relationship

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

DURING the turmoil of the Monica Lewinsky investigation, President Clinton has turned for spiritual comfort to an unexpected source, the Rev Jesse Jackson.

Although both are Democrats, the preacher and President have clashed over politics in the past. Mr Jackson once described Mr Clinton as Machiavellian and of having a character flaw. Mr Clinton has accused Mr Jackson of back-stabbing and double-crossing.

Time has reconciled them. Now Mr Clinton and Mr Jackson, a Baptist minister and civil rights leader, have frequent private prayer sessions that Mr Jackson described as a sacred relationship. The first was a day or two after the Lewinsky scandal broke in January. The following Sunday, Mr Jackson was invited to the White House to watch the Super Bowl. After the game, the two men spoke about the crisis and the coming State of the Union speech.

Mr Jackson told *The New York Times*: "I thought it was important in very private tones to stand with him and offer spiritual assurances. I sensed that the waters were turbulent, the ship of state was a bit rocky. I tried to talk to the captain of the ship and said to keep focusing on the State of the Union and not to drown in the turbulent waters."

Mr Jackson revealed that he also chats regularly with Chelsea Clinton and prays with her, too. He said that, at the height of the storm, her strength became a source of tremendous support for the President and Hillary Clinton. Had Chelsea not been strong in the "early and traumatic stages", it would have torn them apart, Mr Jackson was quoted as saying.

Paul Begala, a senior aide to Mr Clinton, confirmed that during the crisis Mr Jackson had been "as good a friend as we've had". His emotional support should not be underestimated. Mr Jackson will accompany Mr Clinton on a visit to Africa this month.

Mr Jackson's presence as White House spiritual adviser is reminiscent of similar guidance offered to Richard Nixon by the Rev Billy Graham during Watergate. Just this week Mr Graham, 79, said that, knowing the frailty of human nature, he would forgive Mr Clinton if he were found to have had sex with Ms Lewinsky and told her to lie about it. "He has such a tremendous personality that I think the ladies just go wild over him," Mr Graham said.

Iron Mike sues his promoter for $100m winnings

BY JAMES BONE

IN A battle of boxing titans, Mike Tyson has thumped Don King with a $100 million (£61 million) lawsuit that claims his long-time promoter cheated him of his winnings.

The former world heavyweight champion, temporarily barred from the ring for biting Evander Holyfield during a title bout last year, accuses King of "double- and triple-dipping in purse and telecast money" to boost his business, fund renovations to his luxury homes and support his family.

Tyson decided to go to court when he discovered that King owned the rights to his face and image. "This felt like slavery to Mike," one insider said. "Iron Mike" now charges that King, who has promoted the Brooklyn bad boy for the last decade, coerced him into signing a new long-term contract when he was in jail for raping a Miss Black America contestant. The suit also claims King paid bonuses to Tyson's managers to make them his "puppets" and provided Tyson with an accountant who once refused to retrieve the boxer's files because they were in cabinets owned by King. King also allegedly made Tyson pay consultancy fees to the promoter's wife and stepchildren.

Since his release from prison in 1995, Tyson has earned an estimated $140 million for six fights. But his lawyers complain that fraud by King meant his purse "was automatically reduced by at least 50 per cent before he stepped into the ring". Over the last three years, the suit claims, King "wrongfully" took some $45 million from Tyson.

King, due to go back on trial next week for allegedly defrauding Lloyd's of London over a cancelled fight, said from Mexico City that Tyson's suit had "no merit". "He has got every dime that he has coming to him," he said. "I don't owe him 10 cents."

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Labour leader 'encouraging Arab terrorism'

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

EHUD BARAK, leader of the main opposition Labour Party and Israel's most decorated soldier, was plunged into a damaging political row yesterday after admitting that, if he were a Palestinian, he would have become a terrorist.

Political observers said the remark would encourage the many critics within the party who claim that Mr Barak, a former Chief of Staff, lacks the political skills ever to defeat Binyamin Netanyahu, the right-wing Likud Prime Minister.

Asked by Israeli television what he would have done had he been born a Palestinian, Mr Barak replied: "If I was the right age, at some stage I would have entered one of the terror organisations and have fought from there, and later certainly have tried to influence from within the political system." Although the Labour leader went on to denounce terrorism, his apparent acknowledgment of the logic which foments Palestinian militancy provoked a furore. The remarks were made just as Israeli forces revealed the uncovering of an alleged terrorist cell responsible for suicide bombs that killed 21 Israelis.

A statement from Likud claimed that Mr Barak had "fallen off the track of all logic and correct judgment. He can no longer represent a Zionist party in the state of Israel. By his words, Mr Barak is encouraging Palestinians of the right age to join terrorist organisations."

Reuven Rivlin, a Likud Knesset member, said: "I hope that this was a slip of the tongue rather than a mental error. When people who view Ehud Barak not only as a leader, but also as an exemplary, heroic figure, hear such a statement, they might be led to think, erroneously, that he doubts the justice of our cause."

But Mr Barak was unrepentant. "We have heard in the past things that were similar in essence, stated by [former war hero] Moshe Dayan and, to the best of my recollection, by [ex-Likud Prime Minister] Yitzhak Shamir," he told Israel radio. "Our struggle is not at all similar, not in any way. With us, we never dealt with the systematic murder of innocent women and children for political purposes."

The row overshadowed reports from the border with Egypt that one Palestinian had been shot dead by an Israeli unit which had surprised an alleged Palestinian terrorist squad.

Leading article, page 23



REUTERS

Ethnic Albanian refugees gather in open country after fleeing from the Kosovo village of Prekaz when it was attacked by Serbian police

Albanian army on alert after Serbs' Kosovo raids

BY MICHAEL BINYON
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

THE Albanian army was put on high alert yesterday as huge crowds in Tirana denounced the Serb crackdown on Albanians in Kosovo.

In Pristina, capital of the Kosovo province, Ibrahim Rugova, the Albanian nationalist leader, accused Serbia of using police for ethnic cleansing. He said women and children had been killed during police raids in Drenica and he appealed to the international community for help.

The Serbian police said yesterday it had "destroyed the core" of the separatist Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) in Kosovo, killing the guerrilla leader Adem Jasari and capturing 30 fighters.

Albania yesterday called for an emergency meeting of the United Nations Security Council. Leave was cancelled for all troops along Albania's northern border with Yugoslavia in response to what Albania said was an increase in Serbian troop activity.

President Meidani told a 20,000-strong rally in Tirana's main square that Serbia was guilty of "brutal violence" against ethnic Albanians.

Western analysts said that intervention by the Albanian army was unlikely, as the country was still weak after last year's civil strife.

Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, gave a warning yesterday that the crisis in Kosovo was deepening. He said that he had confronted President Milosevic with the need to put an end to the killings and get the political process started in Kosovo. "I got no satisfactory response."

Britain's ambassador in Belgrade was yesterday sent to Pristina with the ambassadors from the five other Contact Group countries to assess the situation. Foreign ministers of Britain, America, Russia, France, Germany and Italy meet in London on Monday to decide on a response to Belgrade's actions.

Elk test claims its second car victim

FROM ROGER BOYES
IN BONN

ANOTHER German car has fallen victim to the elk test.

According to the German motoring organisation, ADAC, the Volkswagen Golf followed in the tyre tracks of the Mercedes A Class and toppled over during a difficult avoidance manoeuvre. The exercise, known as the elk test, simulates the possibility of an antlered deer suddenly blocking the path of a car travelling at high speed.

Volkswagen will check the safety of all its Golf class models. But the company is furious with its rival, Opel, which conducted the tests.

VW's chief executive, Ferdinand Piech, said the new Golf — and all the older models — would now be tested by an independent institute "to end this backyard testing".

The roll-over incident occurred last month and news leaked on the eve of the Geneva Motor Show. "The Golf toppled over on the experimental track, at an event staged by Opel, after 1,800 trial manoeuvres in extreme conditions," said VW communications director, Klaus Kocks. "The Golf has no problems with its chassis." There will thus be no huge withdrawal programme, as with the Mercedes A Class, or Baby Benz.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY EDWARD SYKES



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"The art of erotica"

The Times, 2nd March 1998



In Monday's *Times*, Damian Whitworth examined a rather different kind of journal, which has recently gone on sale in certain selected newsagents and bookshops: *The Erotic Print Society Review*. It has proved so popular that, within a few days, Waterstone's had reordered and the Society had to reprint.

The Times correspondent speaks about the spicy writing - by contributors such as Auberon Waugh, Josceline Dimbleby and Barry Humphries - and explicit illustrations, some of which are 'searingly erotic'.

What he doesn't mention is the Erotic Print Society's Catalogue, which has now sold over 35,000 copies. This 80-page little tome, eye-poppingly illustrated in colour, will give you more than just a glimpse of the most private parts of the Society's private collection. Only its price is modest - just five pounds. And with it, a free trial copy of our latest *Erotic Review*.

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THE *Erotic* REVIEW

Tee time at office as indoor contests take off

FROM IAN BRODIE IN CHICAGO

IT STARTED as a lark and has grown into a craze. Chicago's newest golf tournament has all the excitement of a championship — sharp dog legs, pressure-packed shots and a big prize.

What it does not have is bunkers. Instead, a series of short holes are littered with such hazards as desks, coat-racks, waste-paper baskets, filing cabinets and office chairs.

The American golfer's secret of keeping a putter in a cupboard and furtively hitting a ball across the office carpet when the boss is not looking has been raised to the level of a city-wide challenge.

The other evening, 64 finalists, each with their own cheering squad, descended on the Fairmont Hotel to decide the first amateur indoor Glenlivet Office Putting Championship.

They found the hotel ballroom laid out with a patterned carpet, an array of office furniture and 15 fiendish holes. The atmosphere buzzed with intensity. Competitors took practice shots, trying to judge how their ball would break on the carpet's pile.

One par-four hole required putting around three sides of a desk. On others, where the hole was obscured from the tee, shots had to be laid off to avoid book-cases and potted plants. Waste-paper baskets, jutting out from under desks, were the trickiest menace.

The finalists had all beaten their colleagues in contests back at the office to qualify. More than 300 companies from Chicago's business community registered to enter.

"This competition is for golfers who love the game and want to be out on the links, but cannot be there in the dead of winter," said Rick Miller, tournament chairman and event founder. The idea came to Mr Miller, a public relations man, after years of playing in offices with friends — after work, of course. He said: "It got to the point where the rivalry was so competitive that it dawned on me you could actually have a tournament."

Seagram, the parent of Glenlivet single malt Scotch, agreed to put up $350,000 (£210,000) in sponsorship. That included a first prize of a week in Scotland for a foursome to play the leading courses, stay in the best hotels and visit the Glenlivet distillery on Speyside.

In office golf, men and women compete on an equal footing. Sandy Young, one of two women finalists, claimed somewhat implausibly that playing in high heels had helped her to qualify at her office-leasing company. Whatever the advantage, luck deserted her in the first round of the finals when she was defeated by Mike Gillespie, a beefy options trader from the Chicago Stock Exchange.

Mr Gillespie putted his way through three more rounds to the final against Geoff Kehoe, a market researcher. Both playing confidently, the pair were tied going into the final hole.

The ballroom fell as silent as the gallery at the British Open as each man teed off. Mr Kehoe hit one of those wretched baskets. Groans from his supporters. Mr Gillespie went off the carpet. More groans. Both were down one penalty point.



A contestant in the Glenlivet championship practises her shot. The "hole" consists of a glass placed straight up

Mr Gillespie steadied himself, though his third shot missed the hole and went long. Then Mr Kehoe's ball skittered out of bounds, another penalty. By the time both men putted out, Mr Gillespie was the champion by two strokes. The place erupted with cheers, back-slapping and high fives.

"It was nerve-racking out there," said the beaming Mr Gillespie, who described himself as only an average outdoor player. His next problem is deciding who to take with him to Scotland. He may make his colleagues play for the honour.

The losing Mr Kehoe said he lost his concentration on the last hole when he realised that this hitherto unrecognised sport might actually give him a golfing holiday in Scotland. "I shouldn't have thought of it," he said.

Leading article, page 23
Golf, page 40



Finalists are cheered on by the squads they bring along for the floor show

HOW TO PLAY GOLF IN YOUR OFFICE

■ The actual "hole" consists of a glass. The glass is not placed on its side but sits up straight. A ball is considered "in the hole" if it touches any part of the glass.

■ The competition is match-play format. A hole is won by the player who holes the ball in the fewer strokes. A match is won by the player winning a majority of the holes (i.e. on a five-hole course, the first player to reach three holes wins). In the event of a tie, the players go to a *"sudden death" play-off, the winner being the one whose* first putt is closest to the hole.

■ A struck ball that hits any obstacle (wall, desk, etc) is considered a lost ball and a one-stroke penalty is assessed. The ball must be placed back at the point where it touched the obstacle. The player is entitled to relief of one putter head distance from the obstacle, but not closer to the hole.

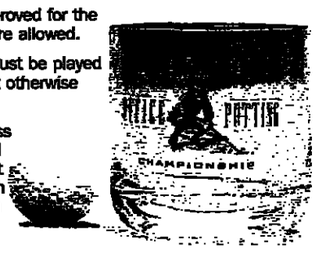
■ *If a putted ball strikes an opponent's ball there is no* penalty. The putted ball remains where it finishes while the ball that was hit is replaced as close as possible to its original location. In the Chicago finals, players marked the position of any ball interfering with play and removed it from the carpet while their opponent putted.

■ Rules of play may be altered when necessary to fit the layout of the office and to add to the drama. For example, an intervening stretch of lino can be designated a water hazard. The ball can play through the hazard but if it comes to rest on the lino a one-point penalty is incurred. The next shot is played from where the ball entered the lino. Any alteration of the rules must be approved by a majority of competitors.

■ All putters approved for the outdoor game are allowed.

■ All matches must be played after hours or at otherwise approved times.

■ Proper business attire is required on the course at all times, though apparel worn on "dress down" days is allowed.



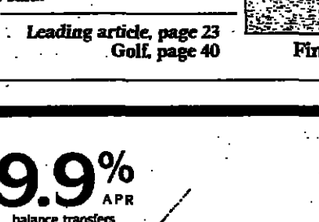
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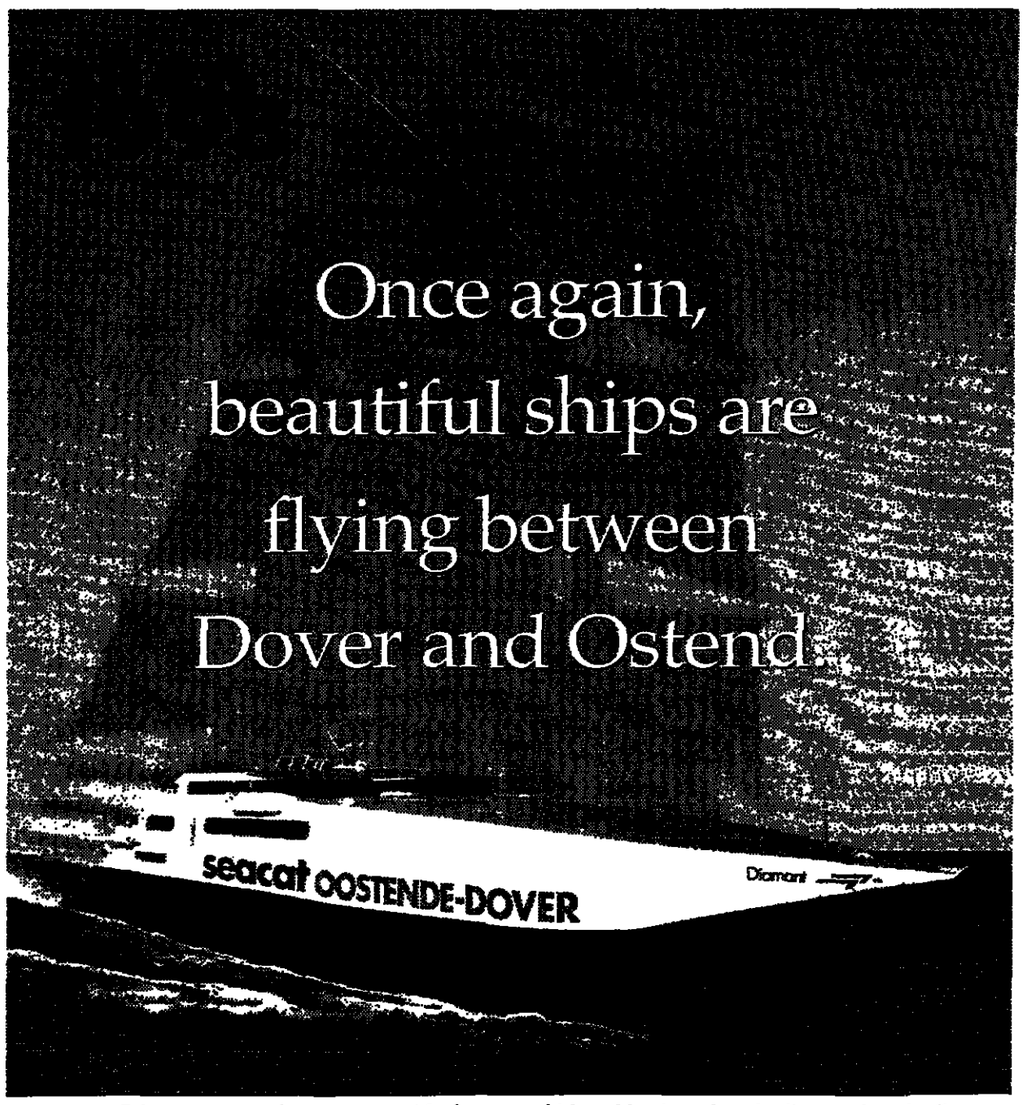
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Can Archer write happy end to his own colourful story?

Michael Gove on questions the Tory peer faces in his attempt to be London mayor

ROBIN MAYES



The "Dame" and the Lord: Jeffrey Archer supporting Barry Humphries in his Edna Everage manifestation this week, for his new touring show

Sane and Able?

No other writer had been written off so many times or written about so harshly but, at last, he thought, the big prize was within his grasp — first citizen of the world's first city. It had been a very good seven days. As he gazed out from his exclusive penthouse, London was spread before him like an expectant bride — awaiting his caresses.

He had been buoyed up that week by support from two formidable women to whom men automatically deferred. Just seven days before, the Queen had accepted his model for modernising the monarchy, and then he had been in every newspaper for his support for Dame Edna Everage's new show.

And his leader had let it be known that nothing stood in his way . . . the future was his, but would his past return to haunt him?

JEFFREY ARCHER'S life has been, in the words of his biographer, *Stranger than Fiction*. This weekend, a happy ending has never looked more likely. While most Tories were too shell-shocked by their defeat last May to focus on the far horizon, he had looked over his half-moon spectacles and glimpsed a chance for glory.

For most Tories, Tony Blair in Downing Street meant five years, at least, of impotence. Lord Archer of Weston-super-Mare, however, realised that it offered him the chance to wield real power for the first time in his roller-coaster life. One of Blair's manifesto commitments was the creation of a new, directly-elected, mayor for London. Lord Archer had spotted, with the eye for the main chance which has never deserted him, his moment.

He was a former GLC councillor with the money to campaign in earnest. Although he had been a friend of John Major, he had never been deemed worthy of office in his administration. Now, however, that slight was an advantage. He was, in his own mind, untainted by the failure of the last Tory Government. For a man whose trademark blazer had been stained in the past by sleaze, it was a novel experience to be able, with brazen certainty, to play the white knight.

There is, however, one significant hurdle which the athletic Lord Archer must clear before the nomination can be his. It is not the referendum on whether the job should exist — that will be a formality — nor even Hague's approval. It is the exposure to searching scrutiny which the hustings could provoke.

As Lord Archer's candidacy assumes an air of inevitability, even once sceptical members of the Shadow ministerial team are talking him up. They believe his past can be depicted as that of a loveable rogue. One Shadow Cabinet member believes the past "scrapes" will "go down well in the East End". The Shadow Cabinet member may be right in thinking that within the sound of Bow Bells, where the Krays are remembered as mummy's boys, Lord Archer's past misdemeanours will be overlooked. But his own campaign team's tactic suggest less confidence. It wants the Tory nomination procedure to be by postal ballot, rather than at an open hustings in front of the whole "selectorate". It fears uncomfortable questions and wishes to avoid that sort of moment of truth. It argues that a postal ballot, because it will reach more individuals than any single hustings could, would give the Tory candidate the maximum democratic legitimacy. Since Labour is likely to have its NEC select its shortlist of approved candidates, the Tories could trump it with a process which would look, in the words of one Archer aide, "whiter than white".

If Lord Archer did not face hustings, he could more easily avoid embarrassing questions about:

His qualifications, such as his claim to be a Fellow of the International Federation of Physical Culture, on the basis of subscribing to a magazine body-building course.

His probity, when he left the United Nations Association after his boss accused him of fiddling expenses.

His judgment, when he lost his fortune on a share tip in the Seventies.

His arrest for shoplifting in Canada, when he left a store carrying suits he had not paid for, saying he had not realised that he had left the establishment's premises.

His memory, when he described himself on his marriage certificate as a research graduate, when he did not even have an undergraduate degree.

And questions, perhaps most damagingly, about the way in which a friend of his benefitted from dealing in the shares of a company in 1994 of which his wife was then director.

If these questions are not raised by Tories before they nominate Lord Archer, they will be raised by Labour afterward.

If he faces the hurdle of scrutiny only after he is nominated and trips up, he will not be the only one to fall flat on his face. The Tories might be well advised to study the whole of the Archer story before they assume it will end happily ever after.

THE ELEMENTS OF ARCHER'S CAMPAIGN

IN HIS attempt to become London's mayor Jeffrey Archer has built an organisation as complex and ambitious as one of his novels. The most visible element of the Archer campaign is London Forum, an organisation set up to stimulate debate on London's future. Its directors include Stephan Shakespeare, the Tory candidate for Colchester at the general election, Fred Housego, who used his victory on *Mastermind* to launch a media career, and Simon Woolley, the director of *Operation Black Vote*, which encourages greater participation in politics by black Britons. Lord Archer may have set up the forum out of disinterested generosity but visitors to its website will find a grinning mugshot of the man who would be mayor greeting them. As well as luring surfers to their site, the Archer campaigners have been fishers of men. Five thousand questionnaires have been sent to a random selection of Londoners, asking them what issues exercise them. Respondents are invited to focus group sessions in pubs — no fancy wine bars for the people's Jeffrey — where Lord Archer gets in the rounds while his team canvasses views. Separate from the forum is Lord Archer's own machine set up to secure the Tory nomination — Team Archer. It is headed by Mr Shakespeare with Toby Vintcent, a former army officer who works for Mercury Asset Management. Mr Vintcent is the campaign's nuts-and-bolts man as director of organisation. Strategic thinking is provided by three commercial organisations.

☐ MORI, the polling firm retained by *The Times* and headed by the drawling doyen of market research, Robert Worcester, has been paid to conduct opinion trawls of the electorate.

☐ TASC, a new PR firm set up by Anthony Gordon-Lennox, will handle press relations. Mr Gordon-Lennox, the floppy-fringed nephew of the Duke of Richmond, handled William Hague's PR during the Tory leadership race.

☐ PMR, a political research consultancy run by Matthew Gaubert-Bushell, will provide strategic and campaigning nous. Mr Gaubert-Bushell ran the "no" campaign in the Welsh referendum.

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The Spring/Summer 1998 catalog photographed in Jerusalem by Oliviero Toscani

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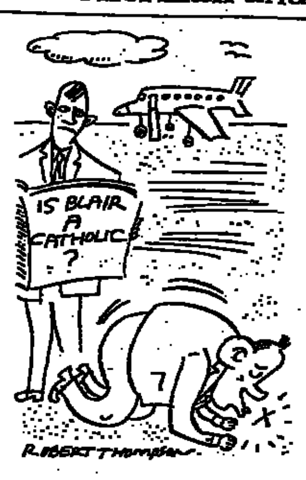
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Blair denies ban on leftwingers in Scots parliament

Selection of candidates will be on quality not ideological grounds, report **Jill Sherman** and **Gillian Harris**

TONY BLAIR insisted last night that there would be no "ideological hit-list" banning leftwingers from becoming members of the Scottish parliament, but emphasised that nobody had an automatic right to selection.

After reports that the Labour leadership wanted to block leftwing candidates from the 129 seats in the Scottish parliament, the Prime Minister made clear that the selection process would focus on securing quality candidates. The reports suggested that troublemakers who had defied the Labour leadership in the past would be unlikely to get through interviews for a place on the candidates list.



More than 800 would-be MSPs are chasing the 60 to 70 seats that Labour hopes to win at the Scottish elections in May next year. But it has now been suggested that several sitting Westminster MPs who would like to move to the Scottish parliament may be blocked. These include "troublesome MPs" such as John McAllion, Maria Fyfe, Dennis Canavan and Norman Godman, who have criticised the Labour leadership in the past.

Party sources yesterday dismissed the reports as "nonsense" and insisted that there would be a "quality cull rather than an ideological cull". They also suggested it was unlikely that Mr McAllion, a former frontbencher, would not be selected. However, there was no guarantee that the others would make the grade.

"When the elections come next year, we want the best possible field of Labour candidates," Mr Blair said. "This isn't about stopping any particular person, it is about ensuring high-quality candidates throughout Scotland. Scotland deserves the best from Labour at local and national level and that is what we will get." Speaking to the Scottish Labour Party conference, Mr Blair said he had read in the papers that he was drawing up an "ideological hit list" to cull certain MPs "as if I would".

"We are not going to do that at all," he said. "But we are determined to have high-quality MPs standing for the Scottish parliament." Mr Blair also reassured MPs that Labour would try to secure equal representation for men and women in the parliament by a twinning mechanism that has been set up.

Such plans are a matter for the Scottish executive and not open to legal challenge, Donald Dewar said yesterday. In his most robust defence yet of the contentious policy, the Scottish Secretary said: "The selection process itself is a matter for each party and as such not appropriate for legislation. In this spirit Labour in Scotland is going to take this unique opportunity to put into place something to which it is tremendously committed."

The Scottish Party has been committed to a policy of equal representation since 1991. A system of twinning constituencies has already begun. Shortlists are being drawn up so that one man and one woman can be chosen as candidates from each pair of constituencies. However, a leaked memo to the Prime Minister from the Lord Chancellor which claimed that the process was open to legal challenge under the Sex Discrimination Act provoked outrage among women in the Labour Party.

Rosina McCrae, of Scottish Labour's women's committee, said: "We are incandescent with rage. We have been put through hurdles and hoops to get to the point we are at now and at the last minute we are being made to face this."

Tomorrow Miss McCrae and her colleagues from Glasgow Govan women's group will present a resolution to the conference in Perth calling on the Government to make the necessary amendments to the Sex Discrmination Act which will allow political parties to be excluded and ensure that the mechanisms are in place to bring equal representation about.

But according to one MP, work is under way to ensure that the process will be effective in time for the Scottish elections.

"The constituencies are preparing. There are groups of people looking at which constituencies are to be paired. Plans are very well advanced.

"I believe it is not necessary for legislation to be changed. It is up to the political parties to decide," Rosemary McKenna, MP for Cumbernauld and Kilsyth, said.

"Without doubt the fact that we have 101 Labour women is entirely due to the all-women shortlists that we had before the general election." Mrs McKenna said an equal representation was "totally accepted" in Scotland. "There is no resistance," she said.

JEFF MITCHELL



Tony Blair yesterday, denying that troublemakers will be banned as candidates

Cold wind of reality has sobering effect

CONFERENCE SKETCH

IT MAY have been because Labour simply can't get used *to being the party of government.* It may have been because the party is being given such a rough ride in the Scottish press. Or it may simply have been because the delegates were meeting in a converted ice rink.

Whatever the reason, Labour's first conference since winning a landslide election was distinctly lacking in triumphalism.

Queueing in an icy wind outside the Dewar Rink in Perth, the party faithful flapped their arms to keep warm and contemplated a lengthy wait. The fact is that Labour's Scottish conference is not being held in the most auspicious circumstances. For days, the papers have been full of local authority cuts and escalating council taxes. Schools, community services, council jobs — everything that last year's conference in Inverness associated with Tory misrule — were back on the agenda.

Even the saintly Donald Dewar, the Scottish Secretary, who was meant to be the safe hand on the tiller, seemed to be slipping.

Refusing Sean Connery a knighthood, abandoning the Calton Hill site everyone had wanted for the parliament, threatening to cleanse the party of Old Labour candidates, sticking to Tory spending limits — none of these was best calculated to raise the spirits.

So when an early speaker began asking hard questions like: could a Scottish parliament insist that cigarettes were sold in plain packets, or why did we still have "smash and grab capitalism", a sense of tired resignation seemed to settle.

But then things seemed to warm up. A video reminded them of that great election day. Someone reminded them of "the Ice Age of Toryism", and Jack McConnell, the general secretary, made the best joke of the day when he attacked a Scottish nationalist as "the sort of fellow you take an instant dislike to because it saves you time".

By the time Tony Blair bounded onto the platform, they were prepared to believe that things weren't, after all, as bad as they had feared. They warmed to his attacks on hereditary peers, his reference to Tory privatisation plans, his tribute to Mo Mowlam. He pressed enough old Labour buttons.

Only when he reminded them of the hard tasks ahead, the need for economic competence, discipline and determination, did silence reign. That, after all, was what lay outside in the cold winds swirling round the ice rink.

MAGNUS LINKLATER

Heseltine phone ruled out of order

BY JAMES LANDALE, POLITICAL REPORTER



Heseltine: told to switch off

MICHAEL HESELTINE, one of the most polished parliamentary performers, broke one of the strictest rules of the Commons yesterday: he allowed his mobile phone to ring.

MPs are under orders from Betty Boothroyd, the Speaker, to switch their pagers and phones on to vibrate when they enter the chamber. But as Mr Heseltine rose to speak in yesterday's debate on the hunting Bill, the piece of electronic gadgetry in his suit pocket had completely slipped his mind. Halfway through his speech, the phone rang.

MPs around him instantly fumbled in their pockets to see if they were the guilty party. A second ring was heard. Mr Heseltine continued speaking. The phone rang again. Only then, as laughter rang out across the chamber, did Mr Heseltine realise that it was his phone.

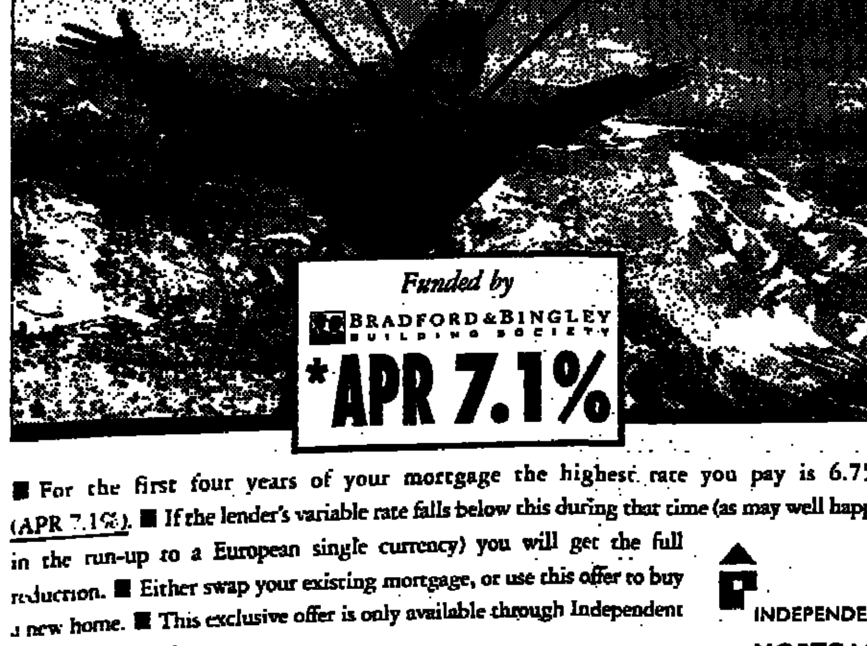
Sir Alan Haselhurst, the Deputy Speaker, ordered him to turn it off. The embarrassed MP for Henley quickly fished the phone out of his pocket, unflipped the keyboard and pressed the off switch.

Mr Heseltine said later that it had never happened to him before. "I couldn't understand where this noise was coming from," he said. "I looked around the chamber and suddenly realised it was coming from my pocket."

He had no idea who had called him. "It was probably a wrong number because very few people have that number," he said. "It is my phone for gardening. Only my secretary and my family have the number."

The first MP to have been ticked off for allowing a mobile phone to ring in the Commons was Tessa Jowell, the Health Minister. In October 1996, she forgot to turn it off and earned a strong rebuke from Dame Janet (now Lady) Fookes, then Deputy Speaker, who said: "The Speaker has very strong views about modern technology. It should not be heard in this chamber."

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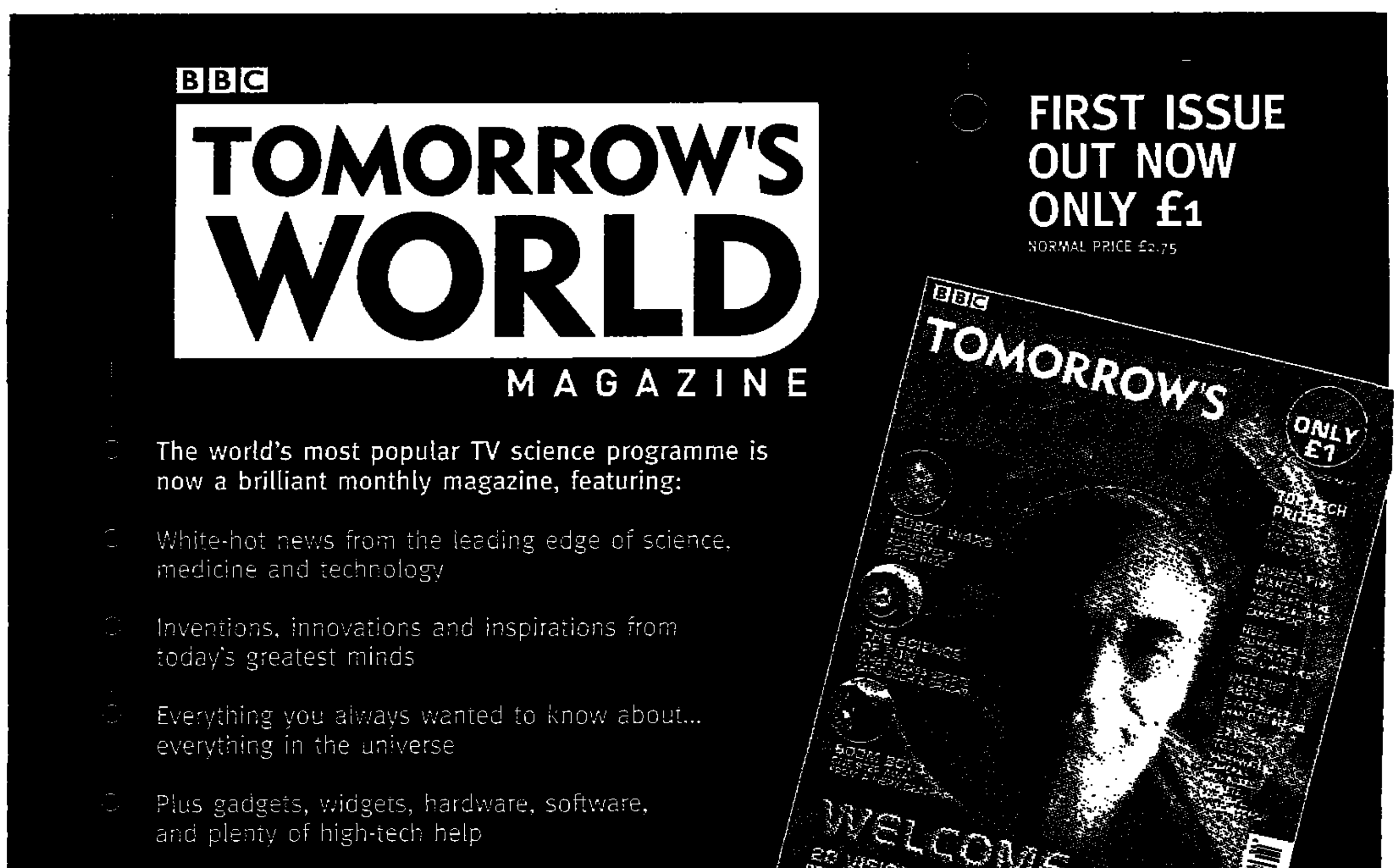
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Hollywood's secret focus on apocalypse

America's footage of its nuclear tests, filmed by men who took appalling risks, is a sobering record of the world's deadliest weapons, **Giles Whittell** writes

GEORGE YOSHITAKE calls himself unflappable, and 42 years ago he had a chance to prove it. Summoned from Los Angeles to film a nuclear test in the Nevada desert, he was told that in a break from normal practice he would be standing at "ground zero", the point on the ground directly under a nuclear-tipped missile scheduled to explode at 10,000ft.

Mr Yoshitake, now 68, remembers asking his superior what kind of protection he would be wearing. "He said, 'none'. But I had a baseball cap, so I wore that just in case. When the bomb went off I could see the ground light up. Afterwards I looked up and could see the doughnut-shaped cloud. I had the fullest confidence the test would go as planned, and so it did. For me, it was just a job."

Throughout the Cold War, extraordinary footage of this and hundreds more American nuclear tests was shot by Mr Yoshitake and other civilian cameramen employed by a secret US Air Force studio in the Hollywood Hills. Declassified last year, the films are a sobering record of the deadliest weapons ever. When an edited selection is broadcast in America for the first time this month, it will mark the first public curtain-call for a few dozen filmmakers who ran appalling risks to help to contain the Soviet Union "bad guy", as one of them put it, yet who were not permitted to discuss their work even with their wives.

Douglas Wood was a colleague of Mr Yoshitake at Lookout Mountain Studios, housed in an unmarked, bunker-like building at the top of Laurel Canyon in the heart of what is now film-star suburbia. In 1951, as atmospheric testing began at the Nellis site north of Las Vegas, he was assigned to film nuclear blasts from the bombardier's position in the belly of an air force bomber, directly over ground zero.

"They'd say 'Bombs away', then give a countdown," he recalls in a documentary made for the 50th anniversary of the Lookout Mountain facility. "You were meant to wear a pair of goggles with almost opaque lenses. I thought I'd wait till the count got to one, but then I ripped the lens right out of the goggles. Panic set in. I slapped my hand over my eyes and when the flash went off I could see the bones in my fingers."

Mr Wood filmed more than 200 of the 331 atmospheric tests carried out by the US between 1945 and 1962, and witnessed others detonated underground in Nevada and underwater in the Pacific. Like the other Lookout Mountain camera crews, he insists his health did not suffer as a result, but admits that he pushed the limits measured by radiation-gathering badges worn by everyone involved.

"When you got too much radiation for that year, they sent you home," he said. "I don't know how many times I was sent home, or how many weapons I missed, but I'd say I saw 80 per cent of them."

Film crews were positioned as close as two miles to ground zero operating some cameras by hand while others were encased in steel and put even closer to the blast to be controlled remotely. In the newly released footage, men can be seen filming nuclear explosions in ordinary work clothes, but they were given breathing apparatus and radiation suits for recovery work and usually returned to Hollywood between the tests.

Others were less lucky. The second US nuclear test in the Pacific, the infamous underwater "Baker shot" of July 1946, showered a vast area around Bikini Atoll with intensely radioactive steam. A Japanese trawler crew received a dusting of nuclear ash, while thousands of American military personnel were exposed to dangerous levels of gamma-rays and plutonium.

The US Navy had hoped to show the world that its ships were unsinkable even by atom bombs, but its dozens of unmanned target vessels were either sunk or rendered, as one writer put it, "radioactive death traps". To this day the mighty *USS Saratoga*, a Second World War aircraft carrier, sits on the floor of Bikini Lagoon with its bottom ripped out.

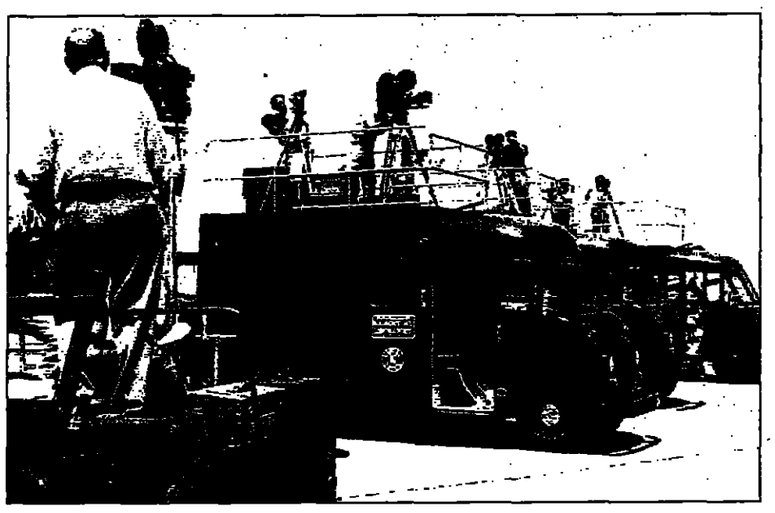
The 21-kiloton Baker shot was a cinematic triumph, however. The event, filmed from every possible angle, is preserved on celluloid as a monstrous wall of water a mile wide, hurled up in less than a second, dwarfing doomed battleships and submerging entire islands.

Pat Bradley was up a tree on Bikini Atoll itself, operating radio-controlled cameras that captured terrifying images of a supply ship disappearing under the nuclear Niagara. "After the shot it took a couple of minutes before the first wave came in to the atoll," he says in *The Atomic Filmmakers*, the edited version of the footage that is due for broadcast. "The second came in higher, then the third completely covered the island, four to six feet deep. After about ten minutes the water had subsided and we could get down out of the tree."

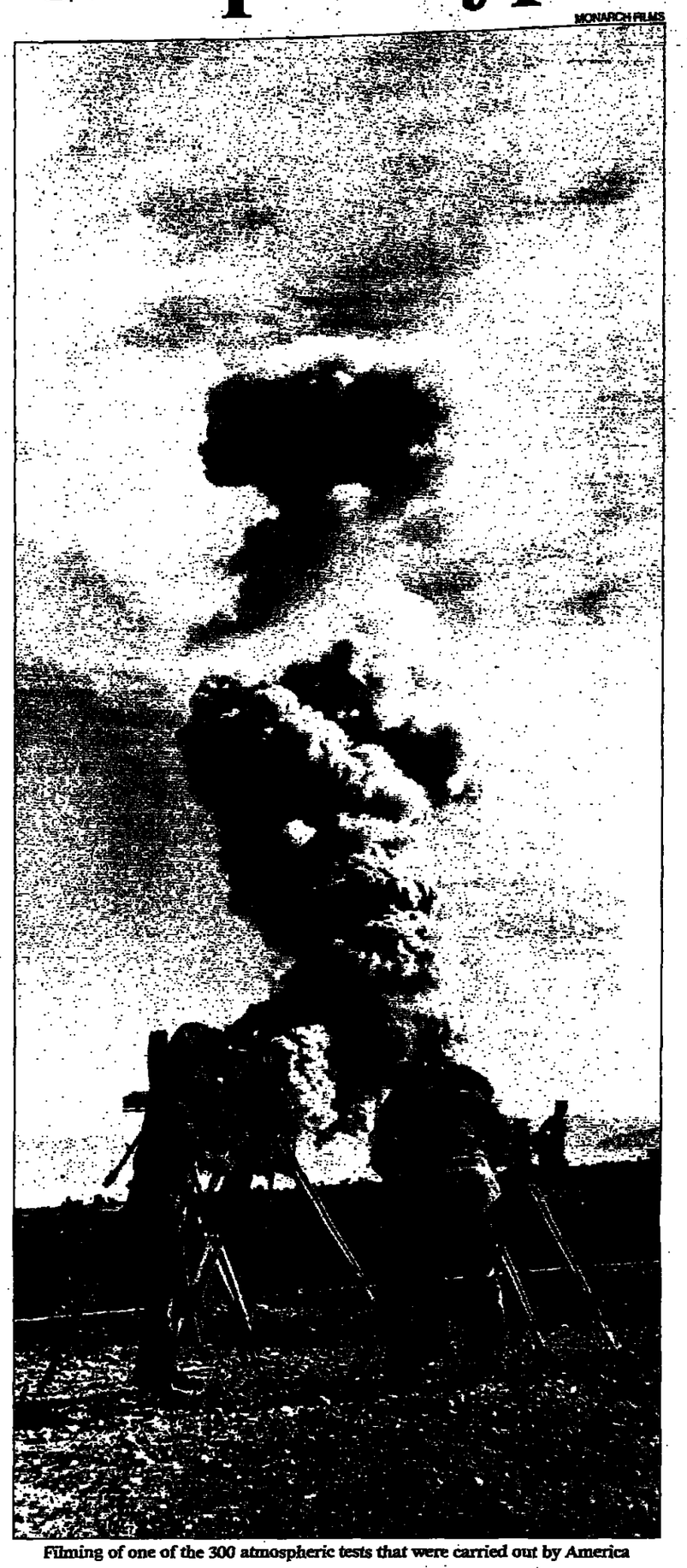
Mr Bradley and his colleagues made 6,500 films before the Lookout Mountain studio closed in 1969. Some, still classified, show in detail how to build an atom bomb. Others offer juxtapositions more surreal than *Dr Strangelove*: US servicemen naked to the waist, barbecuing steaks on a palm-fringed beach before turning to admire a ten-megaton hydrogen bomb detonation.

Such nonchalance belied the effects of nuclear testing on the native population of Bikini, who were moved several hundred miles south to other islands in the Marshall archipelago and are only now, decades later, returning. Bob Hope once remarked sympathetically: "As soon as the war ended, we located the one spot on earth that hadn't been touched and blew it to hell."





Some of Hollywood's top secret film-makers and, below, the cameramen at work



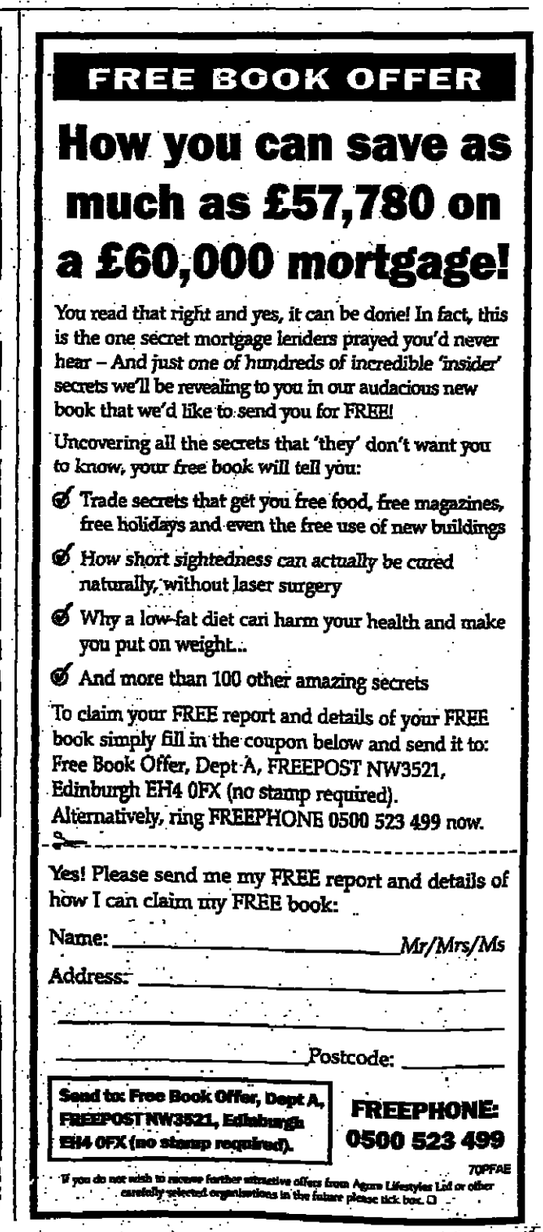
Filming of one of the 300 atmospheric tests that were carried out by America



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CRISPIN RODWELL

Daniel Day-Lewis, left, in *The Boxer*, which features a fictional Holy Family boxing club in Belfast, and Tommy Waite training at the real one, watched by the club's coach, Gerry Storey

Boxing club that fights for peace

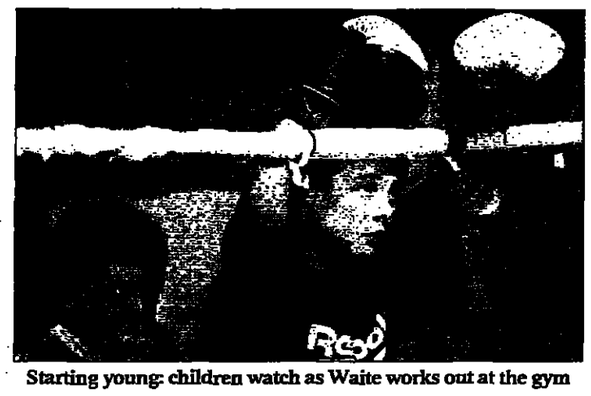
Truth is more remarkable than celluloid fiction at the gym that unites Belfast's divided people, writes **Martin Fletcher**

IN A noisy, sweaty, first-floor gym in a former army barracks in North Belfast, Tommy Waite, the 25-year-old Irish bantamweight champion, is training alongside ten-year-olds, gangly teenagers and muscle-bound men several years his senior. Sporting a woolly hat and two heavy gold earrings, he makes a skipping rope whistle for 20 minutes, then pummels a punchbag into submission. What makes the scene remarkable is that Waite is a Protestant from the loyalist Shankill Road and the gym is in the republican stronghold of New Lodge.

It is an area as forbidding as anywhere in Northern Ireland. Its once-neat rows of terrace houses have mostly been abandoned, bulldozed into wasteland, or superseded by high-rise blocks far grimmer than the homes they replaced. The walls are daubed with IRA graffiti. Vivid murals commemorating the hunger strikers, or demanding the release of prisoners, adorn the gable ends. The police station is a fortress and great steel "peace walls" slice across the streets to separate New Lodge from the loyalists of Tiger Bay.

Here, and in the surrounding square-mile patchwork of orange and green communities, a fifth of the 3,000-plus killings of the Troubles took place. Even during the ceasefire, New Lodge is the sort of place where mothers do not sleep until their sons come home and where boys all too easily grow into criminals or paramilitary thugs. But in the heart of this bleak and otherwise hopeless ghetto, the Holy Family boxing club offers them a starkly different choice.

The club was one of the inspirations for Jim Sheridan's new film, *The Boxer*, which features a former IRA prisoner, played by Daniel Day-Lewis, who leaves jail and resurrects a moribund boxing club, also called Holy Family, in a run-down republican area like New Lodge. Barry McGuigan, the former world featherweight champion who coached Day-Lewis, used to train at Holy Family. One could argue, however, that the original is even more remarkable than its celluloid namesake, and that Gerry Storey, its veteran coach and mentor, has done more to bridge the sectarian divide than its politicians ever have.



Starting young: children watch as Waite works out at the gym

Boxing is big in Northern Ireland. A common joke, which also happens to be true, is that the only medals the Province consistently wins at the Commonwealth Games are for fighting and shooting. Belfast's huge working-class estates support at least two dozen clubs, but what makes Holy Family unique is that, over half a century, it has been easily the most successful, and the only one consistently to attract Roman Catholics and Protestants even during the darkest days of the Troubles.

The spartan little gym, with its bare floorboards and strip lighting, is a sanctuary that offers an alternative to the lawlessness outside: the Marquess of Queensberry's rules in place of the gunman's. It offers discipline, purpose and an outlet for aggression and, within its confines, swearing, smoking, drugs, alcohol and — above all — sectarianism are forbidden.

"All I want to do is keep kids off the streets," said Mr Storey, a soft-spoken 62-year-old with a typical boxer's nose, who has run the club on a shoestring all his adult life. He insists that none of his boxers get into trouble outside. Without boxing, admits Tommy Waite, who is married with two children and works in a fruitshop, "I'd probably have wrecked the joint like everyone else".

The club brings young Catholics and Protestants together in a manner normally impossible in rigidly segregated Belfast. It takes them to tournaments in Britain, Ireland and America. "They're just like my friends," said Waite of his Catholic colleagues. "You get on like you live next door."

Holy Family's other great achievement is to have produced champions whose exploits have — albeit temporarily — united the communities. Their photographs line its walls: four Olympians, 15 Commonwealth Games medallists, countless internationals. But the greatest that Mr Storey coached, when training the Irish team, was McGuigan, who often had 7,000 Catholics and Protestants roaring him on in Belfast's King's Hall.

In the film, the club falls foul of the IRA. In real life it seems that even the paramilitaries approve of Holy Family. These self-styled enforcers apparently recognise the role it plays in combatting drugs, joyriding and other anti-social activities. "They never interfere with us," said Mr Storey. "They all appreciate what I've done."

He recalls that the IRA once suspended a gun battle with the Army to let him through. He remembers loyalist paramilitary godfathers summoning him to the Shankill and telling him to keep bringing teams into their communities. In the 1980s, loyalist and republican prisoners invited him to coach them in the Maze. He suspects the paramilitaries may be giving safe passage to the young Protestant boxers who venture nightly into New Lodge, for, in 29 years of sectarian conflict, not one has been so much as scratched.

Dance group to sue Arts Council for 'besmirching' name

Ombudsman attacks the way grant was stopped, reports **Dalya Alberge**

THE Kosh dance company is to sue the Arts Council after the Parliamentary Ombudsman criticised the manner in which its grant was withdrawn and suggested that a formal apology from the funding body was appropriate.

The case could have far-reaching implications for other arts organisations and the way that funding decisions are made. It marks the first time that the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration has become involved with such a grievance.

Michael Merwitzer, artistic director of The Kosh, an international touring company that combines dance and cabaret with high-tech design, said that any legal action would focus on the way its case was handled rather than the loss of grant. He said the dance company would sue for loss of earnings resulting from "the manner in which the Arts Council made statements about the company's work".

"As artists, we've only got our work," Mr Merwitzer said. "When you find out that a supposedly responsible body like the Arts Council has actually made statements about your work which were misleading and unjustified, that's a terrible thing. We had our name besmirched. Leading people in the council made statements to directors of regional arts boards and theatres. We went to one sponsor who said, 'It is a bit difficult, given what the Arts Council had to say about you.'"

In 1993, the council's dance panel announced that it was reducing its £200,000 funding to The Kosh by £50,000. A year later, it withdrew the entire grant, saying that two of its productions had been disappointing. The ombudsman noted: "My investigation has established the contrary." Although some critics have been less than kind, The Kosh has filled dance theatres since it was founded in 1982. Mr Merwitzer said that 4,622 members of the public protested against the council's decision to end the grant.

In 1995, he approached Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary, who was then Shadow Health Minister and the local MP for The Kosh, which is based at Islington, north London.

Mr Smith took the case to the ombudsman, who said that there had been an excessive reliance on oral rather than written feedback and that the appeals procedures were not followed closely. "I have seen no firm evidence that [the council] informed The Kosh of their appeal procedures at any stage ... I consider the omission — together with the failure to provide information on the appeal procedures to clients more generally — unsatisfactory." He also found that the council made inaccurate and misleading statements in correspondence with The Kosh.

A spokeswoman for the council said that an apology had been made but declined to comment further.

Wry jokes in Darke night of Soul

The Dead Monkey

New End Theatre

THE famous names of screens large and small are taking to the London stage. We have (luckily for us) Juliette Binoche in a play at the Almeida, Liam Neeson about to portray Oscar Wilde at the Playhouse, and now Hutch — sorry, David Soul — appearing at the New End (80 seats), just up the road from Hampstead Tube station.

Soul plays a sad ex-surfer burdened with a discontented wife and the start of a paunch. Oh, and a dead monkey. When *Starsky and Hutch* was on our television screens weekly, I can't recall an episode when Soul smiled. On the stage you can see that his face possesses the muscular requirements to indicate happiness, and he looks as though he would really like to give it a try. But only at the curtain call, responding to long applause, does he finally let it show.

Nick Darke's play, first produced by the Royal Shakespeare Company in 1986, is packed with good and funny lines, but these generally spring from a context of bizarre disaster. Deaths occur, in the unridied home and on the nearby Pacific beach, and the mood of the first half is one of wry recognition that our youth passes and we can no longer perform wonders on a board.

Yet Darke places these sorrows in a comedy, a Darke comedy, and only in the closing scenes do he and the character played by Soul slap the laughter away.

In the days when Hank famously surfed with a pet monkey on his shoulder, he enchanted the young Dolores (Alexa Hamilton). They set up a curious *ménage à trois*, which, it soon transpires, was not what Dolores wanted from life.

Now, at last, the wretched simian has been officially declared an ex-monkey by James Terry's eccentrically calm vet. How will the human beings get along just on their own?

The plot contrives to push them into situations that too neatly reverse the early patterns of dominance — to reveal more would spoil several weird developments — and, when calamity strikes, the cast veers with disconcerting ease from shock to acceptance. But then, this is California, where people are known to be crazy.

In Brennan Street's amusing production, Soul gives an attractive performance as the seemingly easy-going man whose brains have curled up in the sun. He can deliver crisp outbursts of furious dismay, and also manage the play's trickily brutal end.

Hamilton enjoyably shows us how Dolores can change from a doormat to an axe-head. All it needs is the respect of other men and the attention of a toothless giraffe. I'm not joking, though maybe Darke is.

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The greed that can be glorious

Angelica Goodden considers the enduring art of acquisition

The noble cause of refurbishing the Lord Chancellor's official apartment may seem less noble to us than to him for a variety of reasons. The main one is that we are paying for what we suspect is a purely personal desire for magnificence. Conserving a national asset does not, in this case, seem a genuinely public enterprise. How many proletarian feet will ever walk on Lord Irvine of Lairg's ludicrously expensive carpet? Few enough, one suspects, for the concept of "decorating for 60 years" to become reality, at least until there is a new incumbent with difference aesthetic tastes from his or her predecessor.

Why, in any case, should preserving the patrimony appear a self-evident good? Promoting cultural values has not, after all, been a conspicuous preoccupation of our present and recent governments. What dignifies the yearning for beautiful works of art, like those the Lord Chancellor has borrowed? What makes it more than mere acquisitiveness?

The "real" collector, as is well known, has an obsessive desire to possess that may be simply a different version of an earlier, less reputable, lust for accumulation. If one has to be wealthy to collect, may one not collect to assuage doubts about the origin of one's wealth? Tax-farmers in *ancien régime* France perhaps thought so, as they built their fabulous *cabinets* of pictures; so, too, possibly, did the arms manufacturers and the Clydeside shipowners whose galleries were founded on buying ships at rock-bottom prices in times of depression. The modern entrepreneur who turns to collecting may be pricked with guilt about the materialistic origins of his fortune; luckily, the odium attached to wealth lessens when the cash is channelled into art, since art confers a kind of spiritual respectability.

The collector's urge to possess is perfectly answered by the nature of pictures and sculptures, which is that — unlike poems or pieces of music — they can be owned. (Perhaps this desire to "have" goes even further: according to the late Lord Clark, many great *amateurs* — Frederick the Great and Catherine the Great among them — have also been great lovers.) Where the collection is ultimately offered to public view, the moral credit of the collector is immeasurably enhanced. Was this, rather than megalomania, what prompted Napoleon to loot Italy of 1,000 paintings so that, in his words, the souls of the French people could feed on great works of art? After Waterloo, the Allies stripped the Louvre of the most famous bits of booty and returned them to their rightful homes, but the essential point about spiritual enlightenment had been made. It is good, in other words, that objects of cultural value should be shown for the populace's edification and pleasure.

Britain has not always had a good record in this respect, for as the German art historian Winckelmann complained more than 200 years ago, the barbarian English bought up everything abroad and then simply hid it in their town or country houses. Obviously, there is good and bad appropriation. It was one thing for 18th-century Grand Tourists to steal titbits from the excavations at Herculaneum or Pompeii, or for men in the pay of English *Milordi* to tear around Greece pillaging anything they could find; but it was quite another to ship back Greek vases — however many of them actually turned to dough on the seabed — for the British Museum's ultimate benefit, as the diplomat Sir William Hamilton did.

What, though, of the Elgin Marbles? Elgin saw it as his mission to despoil Greece so that England possessed the best examples of Greek art and architecture; but Greece, too, had a claim to its patrimony. The rapaciousness of the English was often tolerated, it is true, once it had been tacitly agreed that the interlopers would pay the natives double for every article that they had acquired. Artistic spoliation has historically seemed one of the easier types of plunder to justify.

> Art confers on its collectors a sort of moral worth

If its justification lies in the notion that art heightens and redeems life, then perhaps Elgin can rest easy. (His career was anyway ended when Napoleon, appropriately, made him a prisoner of war.) But it is a notion that scarcely moves our politicians, who can offer us art only in a place — the Millennium Dome — and at a price no one wants. Why create traffic-jams in Greenwich and yet force its theatre to close?

The Dome in fact epitomises our loss of identification with the very public institutions and political ways of life that, according to the historian de Tocqueville, are preconditions for a self-governing country's continuing health.

If we still feel ambiguous about foreign imports like the Elgin Marbles, it is perhaps because we actually know what it is to prize assets — though they, too, have been imported as often as not. The lastingness of art, a major issue behind the present furore, means that it outlives the patron's urge for self-aggrandisement. It ceases to be an ostentatious affirmation of individual prestige. But does that really make the Lord Chancellor's tempest just a storm in a teacup?

The author is fellow and tutor at St Hilda's College, Oxford



Complete Bullocks *(Dobsonus cunninghamus)*
These beasts act precipitately, charging at will and jumping to the wrong conclusions. Their stock with farmers is low.

Lunar lunacies

A glass of iced Moon water with your green cheese? Don't bet on it

Simon Jenkins

I have always wanted to go to the Moon. I want to look back on Earth and then turn to outer space. I want to stand with Henry the Navigator on Cape St Vincent, and come a little closer to the stars and a little further from evil. I would curve time with Stephen Hawking and bend imagination with Arthur C. Clarke. I would find in a pocket of Moon dust a key to the meaning of it all.

When Neil Armstrong made his small step back in 1969, I was youthfully elated. Here was George Stephenson, the Wright brothers, Edison, Marconi and Whittle all in one. My celestial package tour was only a matter of time. Thomas Cook even took a joke booking. I bet a friend £50 I would get there before I died. He was a cynic and bet me £50 the Apollo programme would die first. He said such superpower rivalry was expensive, risky and pointless. Three years later, Apollo was finished. I eventually paid up.

Now Nasa says it has found water on the Moon and the bet is back on. Or at least Nasa has found hydrogen signals in neutrons bounced off the Moon near its polar caps. The moisture appears to be in tiny quantities mixed in icy rock, a relic of comets bombarding the otherwise barren Moon over the ages. Extrapolating from a series of hypotheticals that would make a non-scientist blush, Nasa spokesmen estimate that the quantities of water would form a 35ft-deep lake, four square miles wide. This would apparently support 1,000 two-person households for more than a century — assuming ruthless metering and no objection from the Sustainable Moon Party.

News of lunar ice crystals has ended years of gloom for those happy travellers through Nasa-land, the science correspondents, cartoonists and sci-fi buffs. They spent this week furiously brushing cobwebs from little green men and giant leaps for mankind. Suddenly the Earth has found a "filling station" in space. Human settlements on the Moon are feasible. We can laze on lunar waterbeds. We can order Scotch on the lunar rocks. We can pop up from Cape Kennedy, get a tankful from the Sea of Tranquillity and hotfoot it to Mars by opening time. Water reserves are said to be between 11 and 330 million tonnes (a gem of pseudo-precision), which opens the Moon to adventure tourism and offers intergalactic travellers their first motorway comfort station. Book now to avoid millennial disappointment.

Up to a point. Despite my eagerness to believe such hokum, it sounds inherently implausible. To a layman, the task of mining a limited reserve of water from 99 per cent meteoroid rock at -300F on the dark side of the Moon is ridiculous. An extraction plant shipped out from Earth would need vast quantities of solar energy, to be worked by miners in atmospheric suits. The rock would need conversion, not just into water, but into liquid propellant for onward space travel. This would all have to be cheaper and safer than ferrying such propellant to an Earth-orbiting "garage". I cannot believe it.

The object of this exercise is apparently to send people into outer space. What for? This seems highly improbable given the efficiency of unmanned probes, which is why no human being has ventured beyond the Earth's orbit throughout the last quarter of the 20th century. Putting a man on the Moon was a poetic rather than a scientific venture. As for outer space, we will surely never have fuels capable of sending us out of the galaxy, through Stephen Hawking's "imaginary time" and the realm of ten dimensions. As Hawking disciples will recall, he issued a warning of "bad news for would-be space travellers: the extra dimensions would be far too small to allow a spaceship through". Perhaps there are benefits from experiments that can be done only on the Moon. I cannot believe they justify the danger and expense of mining the Moon's limited stock of water.

After the demise of the Apollo programme, scientists concluded that machines could do as much as people in space, far more cost-effectively. Even in the gung-ho Sixties, Nasa mostly presented the Moon project as one of prestige. It said that the far side of the Moon might be "dotted with Soviet names". To decry the psychology of prestige, said one official in 1964, was "to show a limited awareness of historical forces in society". Jules Verne had predicted in the last century that America would not rest content until it had put the Star-Spangled Banner on the Moon. He was right. Once this feat was achieved, interest waned.

I suspect that this week has seen another ploy by the Big Science lobby. Nasa has long been superb at public relations. It is getting less good at touching the American taxpayer for cash, even for its accident-prone manned missions. Yesterday's much-hyped tale about "water on the Moon" was actually a second run. Water was first suggested, with similar headlines, by Nasa's unmanned *Clementine* probe in March 1994. The figure quoted then was "a billion cubic metres". This week's *Lunar Prospector* merely confirmed the earlier story, albeit with rather less water.

The hyperbole is reminiscent of that which surrounded "There's life on Mars" two years ago. Nasa's discovery of "fossilised bacteria" particles in a Martian meteorite was trumpeted by an ever-gullible press. The particles were later dismissed as Earthly contamination and the story was discredited by serious scientists. Nasa was at the time seeking funds for a Mars probe.

The true adventurer is always thrilled by any extension of man's reach into space. It offers the most spectacular challenge to Wordsworth's Newton, "A mind for ever voyaging through strange seas of Thought, alone". Not for nothing are billions spent each year on space games, space fiction, space soap operas and, for a while, space arms races. At any one moment, two of the 50 channels on Cable TV are delving into space. The admirable Brian Aldiss enthused in yesterday's *Express*: "There will be no returning to Earth, but Ganymede should prove a brilliant and surreal place in which to live." But his opening question was down to Earth. How much would we pay for a bottle of Moon water? Like Arctic ice in the gin, the Moon is chic or it is boring.

That is the long and short of it. I imagine visiting the Moon would be like going to Greenland, an experience to be had once and then forsaken. At the check-in desk will gather intergalactic hitch-hikers with money to burn, Douglas Adams's chiropodists, hairdressers and management consultants, sent by their bosses on a final adventure holiday. Their destination is not the 15th-century Atlantic, an ocean of mystery, rumour and possible wealth. We know all about the Moon. We have seen it on television. The only point in going there is to come back and say we have been. And we will have to pay the fare on this greatest big dipper ride of all time.

It will not come cheap. The manned Apollo missions blew £15 billion in three years, cash mobilised only in a climate of anti-Soviet rivalry. Every Everest is a challenge, to willpower and to engineering alike. But the Moon was conquered, with an American not a United Nations flag, to prove the supremacy of capitalism over communism, not to advance the cause of science. Even a simple voyage to confirm the presence of water on the Moon cost £38 million, considered bargain basement in rocketry circles. This is expensive research for surely the most modest of results.

I cannot believe that even astrophysics, the chief beneficiary from space exploration, would make lunar colonisation its priority. No more would it demand resources for manned voyages to the bottom of the ocean. Science has let us gain knowledge without risking human life, through remote control, radio technology and miniaturisation. Our understanding of the Universe is advanced more cost-effectively by terrestrial observation, and tapping the mind of a Hawking, than by wandering the Moon with a water-rod.

Put another way, this relentless quest for meaning is pursued as much within ourselves as in the conquest of space. The poet Robert Frost offered the telescope and the microscope as "two instruments of nearly equal hope". I prefer the microscope. Its revelations are more intimate, and no less awesome. Yet as Frost concluded, neither instrument has the answer. "We dance round in a ring and suppose. / But the Secret sits in the middle, and knows."

Grow old with disgrace

Let me enjoy my lingering youth, pleads **Rachel Campbell-Johnston**

I am a sad, singleton adultescent, apparently. What did I do to merit the abuse? I turned thirty. I didn't marry. But even if I had, what good would it have done? What point are kids, a cat or Colefax and Fowler if you know crack isn't something in an Irish theme pub, if you might listen to Radiohead instead of Radio 2? The real problem with people like me is that we won't settle calmly down into senility. Why should we? We are in the first flush of our "middle youth".

Middle youth, of course, is little more than a figment of the media imagination, a lifestyle-tag dreamt up by the magazine *Red*. But it has been eagerly seized upon by the admen to band together an in-crowd of middling income, middling aged professionals, browsing nostalgically in the middle of life's road. Only the kids are complaining, according to Jacques Peretti in *The Modern Review*. They feel dispossessed. Their culture has been filched from right under their Reeboks. What is there left for them to rebel against?

This is nothing but the generational grousing of a younger sibling whining that "it's not fair". There is nothing wrong with trying to prolong one's youth. Having taken so long to cultivate one's vices, one might as well hang around to enjoy them a bit. To pontificate upon some arbitrary cut-off point when youth suddenly turns into middle age is as bossy as the headmistress who declares that girls must start wearing tights at the age of 14.

Adolescence nowadays can be stretched out longer than a pair of wet stockings. It starts ever earlier. There are plans to give 13-year-olds condoms now. It is prolonged ever further. More young people go on to tertiary education, staving off the responsibilities of family and job. Marriage can wait. We can have babies at 40, facelifts at 50, and toyboys at 60. Adolescence, at a tug, will elongate from infancy to impotence.

So today's teenagers should leave their elders to the follies of youth. They should let them dip into their pick'n'mix culture of Nike and Nicole Farhi, of Blur and Bach, of Emin and Beast. They can rest content that more often than not it will appear as naff as a mix and match outfit from Etam. Middle youth is no more than an adman's scam. It is as synthetic as a Spice Girls song. Some things will never be cool, no matter what the marketing moguls say.

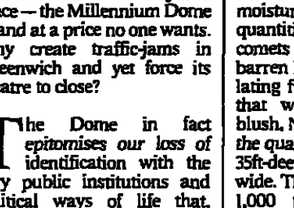
Youth culture has never been something that has happened in the middle of the media. You will not find it engaging in the grip-and-grin sessions of a Downing Street date. The real rebellions are shapeless, shifting, evasive and febrile. They happen somewhere in the streets, in clapped-out bedsits, in juddering nightclubs, in art college studios and council estates. Middle youth will only destroy what it decides to endorse.

And by the time the thirty-somethings have panted apace of it, youth culture will have sidestepped, or moved forward — or back. Its ideas are often retro. Didn't Britpop borrow rather a lot from the Sixties? Haven't kids spent the past couple of years nicking their grandparents' clothes, their Terylene trousers and drip-dry nylon frocks?

Stealing from youth is merely stealing from thieves. I, for one, intend to enjoy my adultescence until my obsolescence.

Row brewing

LORD PALUMBO and friends are vexed that they were prevented by the Queen's Royal Parks Agency from reintroducing a pukka teashop in the Serpentine Gallery, reopened last week after a £4 million refit. The pavilion, built in 1934 to provide civilised refreshments, became a favoured drop-in for local Mary Poppin-types and their charges, including Palumbo himself in his perambulatory years, during their daily constitutionals.



When the building, right, was converted into a gallery in the Seventies, all traces of its original purpose were lost. Palumbo had hoped to bring back the teashop. But strict regulations laid down by the stuffed shirts at the Royal Parks Agency forbade any extension to the building, which would have been necessary to create space for the traditional tea ceremonies.

Palumbo, the Serpentine Gallery's chairman, is disappointed. "One thing is missing: a simple cup of tea," he tells me. Colin Amery, the former architectural adviser to the Prince of Wales, concurs. "Of course, they should have been allowed to include tea facilities," he says. "That is what the pavilion was built for. It would be far better than that rubbish it's filled with." But the agency remains unrepentant: "Visitors can walk down to the lido, where there is a very nice restaurant."



DIARY

EDWARD WELSH

Hurd's thriller

THAT unlikeliest of Lotharios, Lord Hurd of Westwell, is becoming sexier. The former Foreign Secretary, who has all the sex appeal of a Latin teacher at a minor public school, has gone further than in any of his previous nine novels to produce a veritable bonkbuster. *A Shape of Ice*, out in May, weaves a high bodice-ripping count into a plot about an ailing PM, assailed by crises, who has to decide whether to carry on (any resemblance to a real person, alive or dead, is entirely coincidental).

Action is provided by a provocatrice involved in high-level Russian corruption. "Hurd has her getting into some very steamy sex," says a large typewriter. I am so pleased that the eminent international statesman now has time to indulge his creative impulses after all those years as a stuffy diplomat.

● *MY LATEST bulletin on the travails of fallen Conservative MPs details the heartwarming transformation of Derek Conway. The erstwhile whip, who had something of a fearsome reputation among his colleagues until the Great Humbling, has just been appointed to the extremely important position of chief executive of the Cats Protection League. I always thought that, in his deepest heart, he was a something of a pussy cat.*



Supporting role: Sophie Ward

King's troupe

THESPIANS will be marshalling their forces this month to raise funds for an institution that has helped to shape the world perspectives of many in the Cabinet. Victoria Wood, Sheridan Morley and Emma Freud have top billing for the fundraiser for the King's Head Theatre in Islington, which is expected to attract the likes of Sophie Ward and Susannah York in the audience.

A pub and theatre, it has been a venue for catching artistic endeavours for Barnsbury types, such as Tony Blair, a one-time local, and his ilk from further afield. The event at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, will also include a rendition of *A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square* by Judy Campbell, its original inspiration. I wish them all a jolly night.

● *GLASWEGIAN reality has turned out to be too daring for Belgians.* You'll Have Had Your Hole, *the first play and latest shock-offering by Irvine Welsh, the author of* Trainspotting, *has been dropped from the schedule of the Royal Flemish Theatre. The Belgian producers cancelled the performance after discovering the content was far from the comedic tale of golfing one-upmanship they had in mind. Strange then that Welsh's play is going down a storm in Leeds, not a city best known for its broadmindedness.*

MAP: A-Z



WHITHER goes SW10? Alan Clark, the local MP, and Sir Terence Conran, the local victualler, will head the list of Chelsea aficionados debating the neighbourhood's future in a conference at the Town Hall next month. While similar events in less genteel districts would ponder such urgent, but dull, matters as education and housing, topics under discussion at the Chelsea do will include its artistic heritage, restaurants and garden squares. Although the discourse will no doubt be carried out with great aplomb, disagreements can be expected between the Nimby elements and the more commercially minded. Mary Quant and Felicity Kendal, locals who are sharing the platform, have not yet disclosed their views, but Conran says: "The King's Road has had its up and downs. At the moment, I'm very sad about the big, impersonal chains, such as Marks & Spencer and Safeway, that have come to the area." Clark says: "I am very suspicious of anything that makes people money, such as underground parking, which wrecks trees. Chelsea has a wonderful artistic and cultural tradition and it should be preserved." Organisers have wisely invited Lord Cadogan, Chelsea's biggest landowner.

HOURGLASS FIGURES

Prudence now can forestall pessimism about population trends

Old age can be painful to contemplate. Just as individuals go into denial, refusing to think about pensions, declining health or future loneliness, so society finds it hard to face up to the costs of ageing. This week a venture was launched with the aim of making us think constructively about the inevitable. The Millennium Debate of the Age will explore the personal and social implications of longer life and a greying society.

This should hardly be a topic of unrelieved gloom. Ever since men have had knowledge, they have sought the elixir of life. Twentieth-century man has come closer to mimicking it: within 100 years, life expectancy has very nearly doubled. And this trend looks set to continue. In 1951 there were 300 Britons over 100; by 2031, there will be 34,000. A hundred centenarians a day will receive royal telemessages — which could, of course, be signed by one of their own.

Demographic trends have divided thinkers between those who see Time's hourglass as half-empty and those who think it is half-full. The spiritual father of the optimists is the French thinker, the Marquis de Condorcet. He believed that developing technology and the spread of civilisation would ensure a future world of "peace and plenty". The pessimists are sons of Thomas Malthus, the gloomy parson who feared that world population would grow by a process of multiplication while resources would only accumulate by slow addition. So the relentless doubling of the world's mouths would inevitably outpace the step-by-step growth in prosperity.

The heirs of each react in different ways to the greying of the West. Pessimists see a shrunken workforce bearing an aged population on its shoulders. Optimists argue that the West, whose main problem is youth unemployment, has the human resources to increase its productive capacity. Technology will ensure that every young hand which works can produce more than ever before. It is a curious paradox of the debate that those countries with the most optimistic populations, such as Italy, have the least reassuring ratios of future young workers to prospective pensioners. Those inclined to take an optimistic view should realise that they must not neglect prudence now if they are to enjoy plenty later.

Old age can be a time of happiness and fulfilment. But that does depend on staving off ill-health and poverty. The Debate of the Age will look at the importance of health promotion so that more of our lives can be spent enjoyably. But it will also examine the increasing pressure of the elderly on the health service, and the links between health and long-term care. With many women now working, the informal structure for care of the elderly is becoming rickety. But will people now working who already resent the amount they have to save for their pensions also be persuaded to insure themselves against the costs of long-term care?

The pensions themselves need examining too. When the welfare state was founded after the Second World War, people expected to live an average of only three years after retirement. Now they can look forward to 25 years on a pension. No wonder the strain on government finances is beginning to tell. Yet at the same time, many more pensioners have savings or second pensions of their own. No longer is old age automatically equated with poverty. The official retirement age may rise, and age discrimination by employers will no longer make sense.

Technology could improve life for the elderly. New gadgets will make self-sufficiency easier. There will be more jobs that can be done from home. And remote medical treatment may become commonplace. But life in old age — both for individuals and society — will be immeasurably better if its exigencies have been anticipated many decades in advance. We know the demographic time bomb is coming; but it will be affordable only if we start preparing now.

A SERIOUS OFFER

Israel's plans to withdraw from Lebanon merit active support

Fatalism is rarely in short supply in the Middle East. It is regularly contended that the peace process is immobilised and that a slide back into conflict is inevitable. Analysts often lament that United Nations resolutions, regardless of their realism or wisdom, are invariably irrelevant. It has become fashionable to assert that the "peace with security" policy associated with Binyamin Netanyahu is but a smokescreen to disguise a determination to avoid all concessions. There are times when events make at least part of this pessimistic prognosis appear plausible. That it is not broadly true will be demonstrated when Tony Blair and Mr Netanyahu meet in London tomorrow.

The Israeli Prime Minister is here as part of a whirlwind tour of European capitals. His objective is to build support for a fresh political initiative in southern Lebanon. Israel has said that it will withdraw from the territory it currently commands if the Lebanese Government will retake control of that land and ensure that it is not used for terrorist assaults on Israel. This is likely to necessitate some element of multinational peacekeeping presence. In effect, Israel, in a unilateral move, would fulfil the conditions of UN Security Council Resolution 425 passed 20 years ago. Mr Netanyahu believes that France, with its special historic ties to this area, can play the part of facilitator.

This is a serious and significant offer. It would be of enormous benefit to the people of Lebanon. Although the civil war there formally ended in 1990 and economic reconstruction has started, the continued presence of large numbers of foreign troops on its soil has made a return to even relative political normality difficult. This is a particular tragedy for a country once famed for its free speech, free press and diverse culture.

The ramifications of such a settlement might reach much further, paving the way for full peace between Israel and Lebanon. It might also serve as a useful precedent for further discussions between Israel and the Palestinian National Authority — provided that similarly solid security arrangements were designed. It would show that the search for peace does not have to progress on all fronts simultaneously.

There is little doubt that the Lebanese Government would like to embrace this option. Whether it can do so in practice depends squarely on President Assad. Syria retains 40,000 troops in Lebanon and a million of its citizens work there. Northern and central Lebanon are Syria's occupied territories. Damascus not only pulls the strings, it largely selects the puppets. Sensibly, Israel has not made a Syrian military withdrawal a precondition for its own disengagement, but Mr Assad could kill the plan by continuing to foster extremist factions in southern Lebanon.

That is why Israel's plan deserves the active backing of Britain, the US and other European states. Mr Blair should offer to put his weight behind it this weekend. The Israeli proposal represents the only credible means of breaking the prolonged impasse in Lebanon. It would be good for the broader peace if one of the many UN resolutions on Arab-Israel affairs could be implemented. President Assad should be given to understand that he will pay a costly political price if he blocks a positive Lebanese response.

FORE BY FAX!

The tee machine could become a resort for human resources



Office golf is the latest sport. As our man with the collapsible putter reports, its first championships have just been held in Chicago. Sixty-four contestants were picked from 300 companies in order to play for a prize worth $350,000. So this is serious business, not a frivolous round of miniature or crazy golf to entertain the children.

The businessman lining up a putt on his office carpet is a stock joke of cartoons and comedies. In films he is often putted by Jack Lemmon. But the rules of this joke have now been codified. After describing penalties for hitting the hazards of filing cabinet and desk, the code stipulates dress ("proper business attire") and teeing-off times ("after hours or at otherwise approved times").

This may turn out to be more than an in-tray wonder. Most games started as idle pastimes. Table tennis was improvised as an after-dinner diversion. Its first bats were cigar boxes, the balls were carved out of champagne corks, and the net was books propped on end across the dining-room table. All Eton Fives courts replicate the steps of Eton College Chapel, with buttress, pepper pot and "dead man's hole", whence the ball is unplayable. For before it was regulated, Fives was first played by Etonians casually knocking balls up against the wall before chapel. "Snooker" was the name for a new cadet at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich. And the game of snooker was invented by Indian Army officers with time on their hands in the Ootacamund Club, Nilgiris, in India. The origins of golf itself are hotly disputed by Scots, Dutch and even classical students of the Roman game of *paganica* ("country matters"), in which a ball stuffed with feathers was struck with a club.

But the stained glass window in Canterbury Cathedral of a man in everyday business attire addressing a ball with a putter provides a clue that office golf was the original version. In any case golf has become the premier executive toy and relaxation, distracting the mind and oiling the wheels of commerce. City executives already play cyber golf on their screens after the markets close. Bernard Darwin, the Tennyson of golf writers, described how when ill in bed and unable to get to the links, he would play virtual golf around courses constructed by his knees under the eiderdown.

Office golf has the merit of allowing far greater variety of course than the outdoor kind. Desks and linoleum can make hazards as sporting and vexatious as gorse and water. The game is cheaper, more flexible and quite as testing of character as the real thing. At office golf men have no advantage of size or power over women. To the dangers of hook and slice is added the extra hazard of being caught foozling by the office manager. The probability of losing a ball is reduced. So there is no reason why office golf should not develop into an Olympic sport, played on the floor of the nearest stock exchange of the host country, after trading.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Cost and influence of 'superteachers'

From Mr Leslie Spanswick

Sir, "£40,000 for top teachers" (report, March 3): how can schools continue to save money on salaries faced with such nonsense as this?

After going to the trouble of filling staffrooms with younger and cheaper teachers; after packing classrooms with children to employ fewer teachers; after not using extra pay allowances that already exist; after using such cunning plans as paying teachers of special needs less: if some teachers are to be paid this much, after all these savings have been made, it will be the children who will suffer.

Yours etc,
LESLIE SPANSWICK,
The Terrace, Cold Overton,
Oakham, Rutland LE15 7QA.
March 3.

From Mr Neil Bennett

Sir, I wondered about the selection of the new £40,000 "superteachers". Who should assess that subtle giving and taking — from teacher to pupils, pupils to teacher — that goes on in and out of the classroom?

I needn't have worried — it's all safely in the hands of the inspectors, who will *gauge* whether the candidates are *sufficiently* skilled. I suspect this means that they will judge whether the candidate's work reflects current dogma about measurable skills, evident in meticulous planning and recording. Then, for one day each week, the "superteachers" will spread this dogma, under the heading of "good practice", to other teachers.

Haven't we been here before but on a different bandwagon, one painted gaily in the colours of creativity, discovery and mixed ability?

Oddly, children seem to know by some primitive instinct who their good teachers are, but since the pupils haven't been trained in sophisticated assessment techniques their opinions are worthless.

Yours faithfully,
NEIL BENNETT
(Teacher, 1967-87),
8 Sandy Lane,
Edwinstowe, Mansfield NG21 9HZ.

From Mr Dennis Beacham

Sir, Top teachers to earn £40,000 a year! So what will head teachers have to earn not only to keep differentials but to encourage teachers to seek headships, for which there is already a reported shortage of applicants?

And one cannot but compare such a salary with, say, a Captain RN commanding an aircraft carrier or a Commander RN in charge of a nuclear submarine on between £45,000 and £50,000.

Twelve years ago I was head of a successful comprehensive school and left on a salary of under £20,000. Inflation taken into consideration, are we not getting things a little out of perspective?

Yours faithfully,
DENNIS BEACHAM,
Cedars, 113a Main Road,
Hursley, Winchester SO21 2JY.

From Mr Randolph Flood

Sir, It is right that "superteachers" be recognised. I suggest they are asked to wear a blue catsuit under big red underpants and a cape trimmed with university colours.

Yours etc,
RANDOLPH FLOOD,
8 Rutland Close,
Copmanthorpe, York YO2 3SS.
March 3.

An extra tincture

From Professor Robert Spence, FEng

Sir, While my scientific career has, to my knowledge, not suffered unduly from being unable to remember such fundamental quantities as Avogadro's Number and the charge on an electron, Dr O'Brien's mention (letter, February 23; see also letters, February 13 and 28) of the freezing point of gin did recall my extreme embarrassment following failure to remember such a fundamental constant of nature when attempting to manufacture gin-and-tonic lollies.

Yours etc,
ROBERT SPENCE,
1 Regents Close,
Whyteleafe, Surrey CR3 0AH.
March 2.

All the Duchess's men

From Admiral Sir William O'Brien

Sir, A less kind observation about the Duchess of Windsor's men (letter, March 4) recorded the Duke's demotion "from Admiral of the Fleet to Third Mate of an American tramp".

Yours sincerely,
W. D. O'BRIEN,
The Black Barn, Steeple Ashton,
Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 6EU.
113210.640@compuserve.com
March 4.

Unlucky for some

From Mr Simon Rostron

Sir, I note that as well as being the 13th, next Friday is a full moon. What should one do to prepare?

Yours faithfully,
SIMON ROSTRON,
45-47 Clerkenwell Green, EC1R 0HT.
March 6.

Backing for 'life-saving' vaccination

From Dr Diana Walford, Director of the Public Health Laboratory Service

Sir, Nigella Lawson (article, March 4; see also report, February 27) deserves a straight answer to her straight question: "Is measles indeed a killer disease?" The answer is yes.

In the developed world, the death rate from measles ranges between 1 in 2,500 and 1 in 5,000 cases.

In the United States, where reporting of cases is less complete than here, there were 130 deaths out of 46,000 reported cases in their 1989-91 epidemic. In 1988, the last epidemic year in England and Wales, there were 86,000 cases and 16 deaths.

These deaths have been in spite of the availability of modern intensive-care facilities.

Not only does measles kill, figures from England and Wales show that 10 per cent of cases will suffer from a serious complication. These include pneumonia/bronchitis (1 in 25); convulsions (1 in 200) and meningitis/encephalitis (1 in 1,000).

One in 8,000 children under two years old will suffer from a delayed form of encephalitis, which manifests itself years later in severe brain damage leading, ultimately, to death.

It is true that measles is usually an unpleasant but short-lived illness. However, in a minority of cases it is much more serious and may cause permanent disability and ill-health.

Tragically, also, it can and does kill.

Yours faithfully,
DIANA WALFORD,
Director,
Public Health Laboratory Service,
Headquarters Office,
61 Colindale Avenue,
London NW9 5DF.
March 4.

From Dr Ian Cross

Sir, While working in Sudan in 1980 as a medical officer for the Save the Children Fund, I vividly recall a day when I admitted 12 children with measles to a paediatric ward and, at the end of the day, seven were dead. In Burkina Faso, during the drought in the mid-1970s, measles was often the illness which finally killed thousands of children weakened by famine.

Measles vaccination has undoubtedly saved millions of lives of African children since its introduction twenty years ago.

Yours faithfully,
IAN CROSS,
9 Carisbrooke Park,
Leicester LE2 3PQ.
icross@dmu.ac.uk

From Dr G. R. Venning

Sir, The false alarm about pertussis (whooping-cough) vaccine about eighteen years ago led to a disastrous decline in immunisation. Many children died of whooping-cough as a direct result of ill-judged pronouncements by government committees.

We now have an unproven link between MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine and adverse effects. It is important that all concerned should remember the life-saving effect of measles vaccination and not "go wobbly" again by overreacting to such stories. A comprehensive action plan will be needed to avoid unnecessary shortfalls in measles immunisation.

Yours etc,
GEOFF VENNING,
Pharmaceutical Research Services Ltd,
14 Lucas Road, High Wycombe,
Buckinghamshire HP13 6QG.
March 2.

Arts on television

From the Controller of BBC1

Sir, I hope Melvyn Bragg spotted a tiny tremor rather than "a small earthquake" ("One arts programme at a time, please", Arts, March 2).

We have no intention of scheduling BBC1 arts programmes head-to-head with ITV's. The recent clash between *Omnibus* and *The South Bank Show* was a one-off.

Omnibus has been transmitting on Sunday evenings for a while (alternating with *The South Bank Show*), broadcasting programmes (this year alone) on Bonnard, Jim Sheridan, Gilbert and Sullivan, André Previn, Nick Hornby and Zizi Jeanmaire. I have now asked my scheduling team to liaise with ITV's Network Centre to make sure that such clashes between the flagship arts programmes do not happen again. Melvyn is right to be proud of the tradition of arts programmes on the mainstream channels. It is a tradition that both he and the BBC have championed.

Melvyn repeats a "possibly baseless rumour" that BBC1 wants only arts subjects that attract large audiences. This is simply not true. We all know that arts documentaries inevitably transmit to smaller, more dedicated groups of viewers. BBC1 is committed to serving those viewers, and *Omnibus* always has and always will cover the full range of the arts. This year's series typifies that ambition.

Omnibus and *The South Bank Show* have lived happily side by side for the past twenty years. I am sure one week of head-to-head competition is not going to change that relationship.

Yours faithfully,
PETER SALMON,
Controller, BBC1,
British Broadcasting Corporation,
Room 6063, Television Centre,
Wood Lane, W12 7RJ.
March 3.

Not cricket

From Mr Neville Shulman

Sir, As a past president of the Rotary Club of London which, after a long uphill battle, finally admitted women in 1996, I do want to express my regret that the MCC has still failed in this regard (reports, February 25; letters, February 27, March 2 and 6).

There are just too many vital issues in the world that require all our concerns and energies to tolerate organisations that continue to look backwards and refuse to admit women.

In so many activities and movements women are much in the forefront and they deserve our support and total acceptance. It is unacceptable to continue to bar women from a club or organisation and for some members lamely to lament that women will have to wait for the old fogies to die off.

This is certainly not cricket.

Yours truly,
NEVILLE SHULMAN
(President, Rotary Club of London, 1992-93),
4 St George's House,
15 Hanover Square,
London W1R 9AJ.
March 4.

Retirement income

From Mr Louis Schaffer

Sir, A definite pattern now seems to be emerging where the youthful Mr Blair and his youthful Government are funding their compassionate programme for the elderly and sick, not by increasing the income tax of "better-off" wage and salary earners, but from that section of the population least able to afford it, the elderly "better-off".

This includes the withdrawal of tax relief on private health insurance, the "raiding" of pension funds by the withdrawal of tax relief on the income of such funds, possible means-testing of state pensions, and now the contemplated prescription charges for "well-off" pensioners (report, March 3).

I wonder whether your retired readers whose incomes in retirement are for the most part probably only a half of their former wages and salaries realised that this is what Labour had in mind during the election campaign when it pledged that there would be no increase in income tax for the working population?

Yours faithfully,
LOUIS SCHAFFER,
10 King's Bench Walk,
Temple, EC4Y 7EB.

Countryside March

From Mrs Penny Morgan

Sir, Mr Michael Foster must be congratulated for managing to galvanise country people into action. His attack on foxhunting has stirred them finally into voicing their concerns about all manner of ills threatening the very essence of the countryside.

Thank you, Mr Foster. Thank you.

Yours faithfully,
PENNY MORGAN,
Whitelocks Farm,
45 The Street, Kingston,
Canterbury, Kent CT4 6JQ.
March 3.

From the Reverend Malcolm Johnson

Sir, If we are considering the numbers on Sunday's Countryside March (letters, March 3), may I point out that almost the same number turned out for last year's Gay Pride Rally. There were, however, two important differences — last July's crowd were much younger and they received very little media coverage. Why?

Yours faithfully,
MALCOLM JOHNSON,
Swan House, 43 Strawberry Vale,
Twickenham, Middlesex TW1 4RX.
March 3.

From Mr G. R. Miller

Sir, Your leading article, "A country balance" (March 2), asks "can those farmers . . . [who fed] their cattle with the cheapest fodder available legitimately escape some of the blame" for BSE.

It seems to me that if my dog suddenly got a disease which it was found could be passed to humans, and subsequent research showed that the cause emanated from poorly manufactured dogfood, I wouldn't be blamed, the dogfood manufacturer would be. So why should farmers be blamed for BSE if the cause comes from manufactured cattle food?

I am not a farmer, but this does seem unjust.

Yours sincerely,
G. R. MILLER,
Conifer House, 5 Sycamore Lane,
Wymondham, Melton Mowbray,
Leicestershire LE14 2AZ.
March 4.

Weekend Money letters, page 6I

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782-5046. e-mail to: *letters@the-times.co.uk*

Blair's freedom to attend RC services

From the Reverend Stephen Trott

Sir, Why should it be assumed that someone is about to "convert" to another denomination merely because they attend services in another church from time to time (report, "Blair denies conversion after visits to Westminster Cathedral", March 5)?

This is a strongly ecumenical age, in which the term "conversion" is itself officially frowned upon, where Christians can and do freely worship with one another upon occasion. It ought to be a matter for some rejoicing that we have a Prime Minister prepared to demonstrate publicly that the ancient prejudices are fast becoming a thing of the past.

As we enter a period of constitutional reform, why not complete the picture by repealing the offensive statutes still in force which discriminate against citizens of this country on the basis of religion?

That would be a truly fitting and symbolic action for the new millennium.

Yours faithfully,
STEPHEN TROTT
(Member of General Synod),
The Rectory,
Boughton, Northampton NN2 8RQ.
March 5.

From Mr Michael Halliwell

Sir, I, too, have attended services at Westminster Cathedral.

I confess that last Good Friday I felt the need to attend church, not so much for a service but for prayer and reflection during the day. I went to several Anglican churches in Battersea, but they were locked between services and the cathedral was convenient. As it happened, I arrived in time to attend a beautifully sung service with wise words from Cardinal Hume.

For those who might be interested, I have no intention of converting to Catholicism.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL HALLIWELL,
94 Park Court,
Battersea Park Road, SW11 4LE.
March 5.

Lord Irvine's quarters

From Mr Martin Turner

Sir, There is another aspect to the refurbishment of the Lord Chancellor's residence in the Palace of Westminster (letters, February 25, 28, March 4).

Last week I completed some of the Pugin-style carved work for Lord Irvine of Lairg's apartment. As all the world now knows, this work is being paid for by the taxpayer.

I *am* a taxpayer, which means I am a self-employed carver and sculptor who is currently paying his own salary. There are not many of us around and those that are are not making much of a contribution to our pension schemes, but we do consider it a pleasure and a privilege to leave something of beauty in our fortunate country.

Yours faithfully,
MARTIN TURNER,
At the Sign of the Parrot,
Digby Court, Digby Road,
Sherborne, Dorset DT9 3NL.
March 4.

From Mr Julian Jeffs

Sir, It may well prove that the refurbishment of the Lord Chancellor's house is the only act done by the Government to benefit posterity.

Yours faithfully,
JULIAN JEFFS,
Church Farm House,
East Ilsley,
Newbury, Berkshire RG20 7LP.
March 4.

From Mr John Porteous

Sir, Yesterday I came across the following passage in a letter (July 12, 1858) of Lord Macaulay:

I am sorry that our friend the [Lord] Chancellor will persist in making a fool of himself . . . And yet . . . I am not quite sure that I know one of whom I feel confident that his mind might not be thrown off balance by a great and sudden influx of wealth, power, and dignity.

Cannot we take such a cool and tolerant view of the foibles of the great?

Yours faithfully,
JOHN PORTEOUS,
Gonville and Caius College,
Cambridge CB2 1TA.
March 4.

From Miss A. Balchin

Sir, So Lord Irvine's wallpaper will last for sixty years.

But what will happen if the wife of the next Lord Chancellor declares that she simply cannot live with it?

Yours [in the best possible taste],
A. BALCHIN,
13 Lower Meadow,
Quedgeley, Gloucester GL2 4XN.
March 4.

From Mr G. M. N. Whiting

Sir, It is fortunate that the Lord Chancellor's proposed reforms of legal aid are wide-ranging (reports, March 5).

Had he sought merely to paper over the cracks, this would have proved prohibitively expensive.

Yours etc,
G. M. N. WHITING,
13 French Weir Avenue,
Taunton, Somerset TA1 1XQ.
March 5.

COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
March 6: The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh today visited Clwyd and were received this morning at Flint Station by the Rt Hon Ron Davies MP (Secretary of State for Wales) and Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Clwyd (Sir William Gladstone, Bt).

Her Majesty and His Royal Highness drove to the Dee Crossing and were received at the Dee Bridge by the Chairman of Flintshire County Council (Councillor Herbert Clarke).

The Queen named the bridge "the Flintshire Bridge" ("Pont Sir y Fflint") and, with The Duke of Edinburgh, met members of the construction team and the public, before driving over the bridge.

Her Majesty and His Royal Highness afterwards visited the Civic Centre, Connah's Quay, were received by Mr Michael Griffith (Vice Lord-Lieutenant of Clwyd) and the Leader of Flintshire County Council (Councillor Thomas Middlehurst), attended a Reception and subsequently met members of the public.

The Queen later visited Hawarden High School, was received by the Chair of Governors (Councillor Mrs Elizabeth Jones) and the Headmaster (Mr Christopher Harvey), and viewed various activities and an exhibition.

The Duke of Edinburgh visited Optical Fibres' factory at Deeside Industrial Park.

This afternoon Her Majesty and His Royal Highness were entertained to Lunch at St Deiniol's Library, Hawarden, and were received by the Mayor of Wrexham (Councillor David Broderick) and the Warden (the Reverend Peter Francis).

The Queen later visited Wrexham Waterworld, was received by the Chief Executive of Wrexham County Borough Council (Mr Derek Griffin), watched swimming and other activities and met competitors and spectators.

The Duke of Edinburgh officially opened JCB Transmissions' new factory in Wrexham.

Her Majesty and His Royal Highness subsequently visited Wrexham Shopping Centre and met members of the public.

The Duke of Edinburgh, Captain General, Royal Marines, this evening attended a Dinner of the Royal Marines Officers' Dinner Club at Lincoln's Inn, London WC2.

March 6: The Duke of York this afternoon opened the new Command and Control Centre at the Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters in Reading and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of the Royal County of Berkshire (Mr Philip Wroughton).

His Royal Highness, President, this evening attended the Annual Dinner of the Royal Household Golf Club at Twickenham Rugby Football Ground, Middlesex.

March 6: The Princess Royal, Honorary Colonel, University of London Officers Training Corps, this morning received Lieutenant Colonel Alan Brown upon relinquishing his appointment as Commanding Officer and Lieutenant Colonel Nigel Holland, upon assuming the appointment.

Her Royal Highness, President, *The Princess Royal Trust for Carers,* later opened the Sunrise Mobility Factory, Sunrise Business Park, High Street, Wollaston, near Stourbridge, and was received by Mr Francis Graves (Deputy Lieutenant of West Midlands).

The Princess Royal, President, Animal Health Trust, this afternoon attended the Kennel Club Lunch, before visiting Crufts Show, at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham.

Her Royal Highness later attended a meeting of the Anglo-Finnish Round Table Society at Ditchley Park Conference Centre, Enstone, Chipping Norton, and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Oxfordshire (Mr Hugo Brunner).

KENSINGTON PALACE
March 6: The Duchess of Gloucester, Patron, the Enham Trust, today received Mr Peter Bennett upon relinquishing his appointment as Chief Executive.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
March 6: The Duke of Kent, Chancellor, this morning visited the Students' Union Building, the Careers Service and the University Schools at the University of Surrey, Guildford, Surrey.

Today's royal engagements

The Princess Royal, as Patron, Scottish Rugby Union, will attend the Wales v Scotland International Rugby Match at Wembley Stadium, at 3.20.

Dinner

Earl Alexander of Tunis
Earl Alexander of Tunis, Patron of the British-Tunisian Society, was the host and presided at the annual dinner held last night at the House of Lords.
The Ambassador of Tunisia, Lord and Lady McNally and Mr and Mrs Stephen Day were among those present.

Luncheon

Chartered Institute of Loss Adjusters
The Lord Mayor, accompanied by Mr Alderman and Sheriff Michael Oliver and Colonel Mark Carnegie-Brown, was the principal guest and speaker at a luncheon of the Chartered Institute of Loss Adjusters, held yesterday at Tallow Chandlers' Hall. Mr Colin Hart, president of the institute, presided. Among others present were:
Viscount Chelmsford, Lord Norton, Sir Brian Jenkins, Mr Ken Davidson, Professor David Bland, and the Master of the Insurers' Company.

Lecture

Glaziers' Company
Mr Patrick Reyntiens delivered the annual Glaziers' lecture last night at Glaziers' Hall.

ASHLEY COOMBES



John Pattullo and Lucy Webster, of Edinburgh, who have recently announced their engagement

Memorial services

Miss Litz Pisk
A celebration of the life of Miss Litz Pisk, of the Central School of Speech and Drama, was held yesterday at St Paul's, Covent Garden. The Rev Andrew Pavlibeyi officiated and pronounced the blessing. Miss Zoë Wanamaker read a tribute by Miss Joan Plowright.

Mr David Horovitch, Miss Prunella Scales, Miss Lynda Bellingham, Mr Geoffrey Bayldon, Mr Stuart Burge, Miss Deborah Grant, Mr Nickolas Grace, Miss Rosalind Knight and Mr George Hall paid tribute.

Dancing was performed by former students of the Central School of Speech and Drama, choreographed by Miss Wendy Allnutt. Among others present were:

Miss Patsie Child, Miss Sue Levi, Miss Laila Ward, Miss Susan Wooldridge, Mr and Mrs Ken Kennedy, Mr Robin Nedwell, Mrs Pamela Matthew, Mr and Mrs Peter Duguid, Mrs Margaret Ashcroft, Miss Yolande Bird.

Mrs Margaret Robertson, Mr Peter Gale, Mr Alan Row, Miss Avril Elgar, Mr and Mrs Lloyd Shirley, Mr John Jones, Mrs Trish Arnold, Mr Peter Guinness, Mrs Caroline Clayton, Mr Terry Docherty, Miss Heather Page, Mr Geoffrey Case, Miss Sue Holderness, Miss Pamela Sholto, Miss Ann Morrish, Miss Diana Chappell, Mr Graham Swannell.

Miss Geraldine Stephenson, Mr Gerald Mordan, Mr David Robb, Mr and Mrs Peter Retey, Mr Norman Ayrton, Miss Doreen Alexander, Mr Morris Berry, Mr and Mrs Wolf Mendl, Miss Fumiko Mendl, Miss Sachiko White, Miss Jane Gibson, Miss April Young, Miss Angela Down, Miss Anna Korwin, Miss Alda Goldapple, Miss Diana Buckley, Miss Miranda Bell.

Mr Jerome Willis, Mr Mark Lewis, Mr James Walker, Miss Ann Stuffield, Miss Della Lindsay, Mr Michael Warren, Mr John Cording, Mr Malcolm Rennie, Miss Marcia Bennie, Mr Robin Barter, Mr Judy Burgess, Mr Lee Montague, Mrs Vikki Grey, Miss Sandra Freeman, Mr Kenneth Shamley, Miss Angela Morant, Mr Clifford Burgess, Mr David Terence.

Miss Bardy Thomas, Miss Gilly McIver, Mr George Camiller, Mr Richard Morant, Miss Christie Dickason, Mr John Faulkener, Mr Peter Streuly, Mr Alan Marston, Mr David Ashton, Miss Sue Lefton, Miss Anita Carey, Miss Val Holliman, Miss Jenny Grant, Mr Stuart Hall, Mr Christopher Hancock and other friends and former colleagues.

Mr J.M. Pullan
A service of thanksgiving for the life of Mr John Marshall Pullan, surgeon, was held yesterday in the Chapel of St Thomas' Hospital. The Rev J.H. Talbot officiated and Mr Wyndham Lloyd-Davies read the lesson. Mr John Winstanley read from *The Journey of Life* from Sir Winston Churchill's *Thoughts and Adventures* and Mr Julian Pullan, son, read from the works of John Magee. Mr Alistair Smellie gave an address.

Service dinners

Royal Marines
The Duke of Edinburgh, Captain General Royal Marines, presided at the annual dinner of the Royal Marines Officers' Dinner Club held last night at Lincoln's Inn. General Hendrik van den Breemen, Chief of Defence Staff of the Netherlands, the Treasurer of Lincoln's Inn, the Bishop of Sodor and Man and Major R.S. Oostervink were among the guests.

Oxford University OTC
The Lord-Lieutenant of Oxfordshire and the Lord Mayor of Oxford attended the annual dinner of Oxford University OTC held last night at Keble College. Lieutenant-Colonel W.A.H. Townsend, Commanding Officer, presided. General Sir Roger Wheeler, Chief of the General Staff, and Dr Colin Lucas, Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University, were the principal guests and speakers.

Crufts results

Day 2: Hound and terrier group
Airedale terrier: ch Jaideld Gypsy Girl: Mr and Mrs M Lockett, Nuneaton, Warwicks.
Australian terrier: ch Dinky Di Southern Cross: Ms S Stoddart, Ayton, Berwickshire
Bull terrier (miniature): Badlesmere Burnt Fingers at Bullyview: Mr and Mrs A Young, Wickford, Essex
Dandie Dinmont terrier: Inzlevar Gold Standard: Mrs F Chapman-King, Grantham, Lincs
Fox terrier (wire haired): Blackdale Ringmaster: Mr H O'Donaghue, Dundalk, Eire
Irish terrier: Brazan Riesling: Miss M Lovelace, Burton Overy, Leics.
Kerry blue terrier: Balboa Belmondo: Mrs L Herbert, Spalding, Lincs
Lakeland terrier: ch Raytos Fire Medicine: Mr and Mrs P Greenway, Newark, Notts
Manchester terrier: Sophyla Seventh Wonder: Mrs E White, Linton, Kent
Norwich terrier: Kellara Topsy Turvey: Mrs P Phillips, Stoke on Trent, Staffs
Dachshund (long haired): ch Bronia Conquistador: Mrs F Mitchell, Westbolden, Tyne and Wear
Dachshund (miniature short haired): Drydenlaw Darshiki at Evandax: Mr and Mrs W Evans, Northfield, Birmingham
Elkhound: ch Kestos Quicksilver: Mr N Simms, East Goscote, Leics
Finnish Spitz: Toveri Terassi: Mrs L Byrne, Shepton Mallett, Somerset
Greyhound: ch Baldrey Love Story: Mrs J White, Liphook, Hampshire
Otterhound: ch Teckelgarth Ptolemy: Miss M Lerego, Hereford
Soft coated wheaten terrier: ch Ir ch Stevelyn Blue Suede Shoes of Karlskye: Mr & Mrs R Tanner, Cheltenham, Glos.
Dachshund (miniature long haired): Rossglen Ruthart: Mrs P Dutson, Sudbury, Suffolk.
Dachshund (wire haired): ch Lesandnic Lucyrowe: Miss B Farrand, Thirsk, North Yorks.
Cairn terrier: ch Kinkim Roughton Bruff: Mr R Birch, Market Drayton, Shropshire.
Staffordshire bull terrier: ch Judael Both Barrels at Nozalc: Mrs A Hubery, Bishop Auckland, Co Durham.
Welsh terrier: ch Saredon Forever Young: Mr & Mrs D Scawthorne, Cheadle, Staffs.
Bassett hound: ch Cambeglen Rufus: Mrs C Cornell, Leominster, Herefordshire.
Borzoi: ch Starborough Gorse at Redbanner: Mrs J Stevens-Smith, Southport, Merseyside.
Bedlington terrier: Rathsrigg Regale: Mr & Mrs J Phillips, Liversedge, West Yorks.
Sealyham terrier: Wilderson Pie In The Sky: Mrs B Horn, Penrith, Cumbria.
Skye terrier: ch Glorfindel First Foot: Mrs G Marshall, Linlithgow, West Lothian.
Bloodhound: ch Cammonstone Grimston: Miss J Corner, Kelloe, Durham.
Dachshund (miniature wire haired): ch Darisca Delicacy: Mrs L Coxon, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.
Hamilton stovare: I'm No April Fool I'm At Tedandi: Messrs Cook, Daly & Leigh, Alton, Hants.
Ibizan hound: ch Paran Ziggy: Mrs B Stoneham, Bristol.
Saluki: ch Altaya Jaida-Maria: Mr & Mrs N Stanmore, Hitchin, Herts.
Whippet: ch Oakbark Mistic Meg: Mrs J Greenwood-Meakin, Chester, Cheshire.
Fox terrier (smooth): Int Nordic Fin ch Rottriver's snowrecord: Mr K Ohlander, Swansea.
Norfolk terrier: ch Honey King at Gregarth: Mrs K Kruger, Egerton, Kent.
Basset fauve de Bretagne: Toglonia Yemisey: Mrs G Higginson, Ely, Cambridgeshire.
Basset griffon vendeen (petit): ch Tangaer Creme Caramel: Ms L Lewis, Crosshands, Cambridgeshire.
Dachshund (smooth haired): ch Tythe Equinox: Mr S Williams, Merthyr Tydfil, Mid Glamorgan.
Irish wolf hound: Juxtalla Macmathuna: Mr and Mrs U Peiler, Co. Sligo, Eire.
Parson Jack Russell terrier: Mindlen Hooler of Muhlross: Mr D Philp, Melrose, Scotland.
West Highland white terrier: Ashgate Sonsie: Mrs S Thomson, Taunton, Somerset.
Beagle: ch Norcis Finnuala: Mrs E Bothwell, Ayr, Scotland.
Border terrier: ch Orenberg Nightfreight: Mrs J Gillam, Keighley, West Yorkshire.
Bull terrier: Warbonnet Paris: Miss P Hearne, Blackpool, Lancs.
Glen of Imaal terrier: Emeldir Andrath at Wickholm: Mr J Sage, Wickford, Essex.
Scottish terrier: ch Mayson Paperchase: Mr and Mrs J Gaskell, Rotherham, South Yorks.

Forthcoming marriages

Baron C.J.S. Bentinck and Miss L.G. Hogan
The engagement is announced between Steven, son of Baroness Gabrielle Bentinck Thyssen-Bornemisza and the late Baron Adolphe Bentinck, of Klosters, Switzerland, and Lisa, daughter of Mrs Arlene Hogan and the late Maurice Hogan, of Ballsbridge, Dublin.

Mr N.R.F. Lagattolla and Miss C.M. Butler
The engagement is announced between Nicholas Raoul Francesco, eldest son of the late Mr Franco Lagattolla and of Mrs Lagattolla, of Pietrasanta, Tuscany, and Clare Martine, daughter of the late Mr Esmond Butler and of Mrs Butler, of Ottawa, Canada.

Mr G.J. Lubbock and Miss A.I. Spritzler-Rose
The engagement is announced between Guy, elder son of Mr and Mrs Roger Lubbock, of Hampstead, London, and Alison, daughter of the late Dr Ramon Spritzler and of Mrs Leigh Rose, of Beverly Hills, California.

Mr R.E. Pay and Miss S.A. Steele
The engagement is announced between Robert, only son of Mr and Mrs Eric Pay, of Sandwich, Kent, and Susan, only daughter of Mr Donald C. Steele and Mrs Lucille Nast, of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Mr B.J. Stark and Miss A.E. Knocker
The engagement is announced between Bruce Stark, of Canberra, Australia, and Anne, eldest daughter of the late Commander W.R. Knocker, RN, and of Mrs Knocker, of Norton-sub-Hamdon, Somerset.

Mr M.C. Yeldham and Miss E.W. Vander
The engagement is announced between Matthew, son of Mr and Mrs Charles Yeldham, of Streat, Sussex, and Elspeth, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs David Vander, of Farnborough Park, Kent.

Mr P.N. de Putron and Miss C.H. Salmon
The engagement is announced between Peter, eldest son of Mr and Mrs J.W. de Putron, of Lower Bertozerie, St Peter Port, Guernsey, and Hayley, eldest daughter of Mr Richard Salmon, of Long Crendon, Buckinghamshire, and Mrs Judy Crompton, of Oxfordshire.

Mr N.J.B. Smith and Miss A.C. Merry
The engagement is announced between Nicholas Joseph Birkett, younger son of Mr and Mrs D.J.B. Smith, of St Peter Port, Guernsey, and Alexandra Clara, younger daughter of Dr and Mrs R.T.G. Merry, of Ashmead, Gloucestershire.

Mr T.D. Stevens and Miss S.E. Hayes
The engagement is announced between Toby, eldest son of Mr Ian Stevens, of Four Marks, Hampshire, and Mrs Gillian Stopher, of Fleet, Hampshire, and Sally, only daughter of Mrs Mary Hayes and the late Mr Charles Hayes, of Hartley Wintney, Hampshire.

Marriages

Sir Ralph Carr-Ellison and Mrs S. Dyer
The marriage took place yesterday in the Crypt Chapel of St John's, Clerkenwell, of Sir Ralph Carr-Ellison, husband of the late Mary Clare McMorrough Carr-Ellison, to Mrs Louise Gay Dyer, widow of Simon Dyer. The Right Rev Michael Mann, KCVO, officiated.

The bride was given in marriage by Mr Luke Jackson and Mr Ronnie Carr-Ellison was best man.

A reception was held at the Cavalry and Guards Club.

Mr T.H. White and Mrs A.R. Rawlings
The marriage took place on February 27, 1998, in Barbados, between Tom White and Annette (Bumble) Rawlings, née Tinsley.

Weekend anniversaries

TODAY
BIRTHS: Sir John Herschel, astronomer, Slough, Buckinghamshire, 1792; Sir Edwin Landseer, painter and sculptor, London, 1802; Thomás Masaryk, 1st President of Czechoslovakia 1918-35, Hodonin, 1850; Piet Mondrian, painter, Amersfoort, The Netherlands, 1872; Maurice Ravel, composer, Ciboure, France, 1875.

DEATHS: St Thomas Aquinas, Dominican theologian, Fossanova, Italy, 1274; Cuthbert Collingwood, 1st Baron Collingwood, admiral, at sea, 1810; Stevie Smith, poet, London, 1971.

The Royal Horticultural Society was founded by John Wedgwood, 1804.

Jenny Lind, the "Swedish Nightingale", made her debut at the Stockholm Opera in Weber's *Der Freischutz*, 1838.

Alexander Graham Bell patented the first telephone, 1876.

The Bolsheviks changed their name to the Russian Communist Party, 1918.

TOMORROW
BIRTHS: Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, composer, Weimar, Germany, 1714; Kenneth Grahame, author of *The Wind in the Willows*, Edinburgh, 1859.

DEATHS: King William III, reigned with Mary II 1689-94, then alone to 1702, London, 1702; Abraham Darby, iron founder, Worcester, 1717; Sir Hector Berlioz, composer, Paris, 1869; Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin, airship constructor, Charlottenburg, Germany, 1917; Sir Thomas Beecham, conductor, London, 1961; Harold Lloyd, film comedian, Beverly Hills, 1971; Richard Austen Butler, politician, Great Yeldham, Essex, 1982; Sir William Walton, composer, Ischia, 1983.

Accession of Queen Anne (reigned until 1714), 1702.

The February revolution began in Russia (ending on March 14), these dates being in the New Style Gregorian calendar, 1917.

American Marines landed in Vietnam, 1965.

Weekend birthdays

TODAY: Mr David Arbuthnot, racehorse trainer, 45; Sir Robert Atkinson, former chairman, British Shipbuilders, 82; Mr William Boyd, author, 46; Mr W.A. Bromley-Davenport, Lord-Lieutenant of Cheshire, 63; Viscount Chelmsford, 67; Mr G.A. Cooke, former chairman, C.T. Bowring, 75; Professor D.P. Farrington, FBA, criminal psychologist, 54; Sir Ranulph Twisleton-Wykeham-Fiennes, explorer, 54; Mr Clive Gillinson, managing director, London Symphony Orchestra, 52; Sir Kenneth Green, former Vice-Chancellor, Manchester Metropolitan University, 64; Mr Justice Hidden, 62; Mr D.O. Horne, former chairman, Lloyds Merchant Bank, 66; Mr R.F. Humm, vice-chairman and chief executive, Alexanders Holdings, 61; Mr Nicholas Kraemer, conductor, 53; Sir Anthony Lambert, former diplomat, 87; Sir John Latey, former High Court judge, 84; Mr Ivan Lendl, tennis player, 38; Mr Rohinton Mistry, novelist, 46; Sir Paul Nicholson, Lord-Lieutenant of Co Durham, 60; Lord Oliver of Aylmerton, 77; Sir Eduardo Paolozzi, sculptor, 74; Sir Peter Petrie, an adviser to the Governors of the Bank of England, 66; Lord Phillips of Ellesmere, FRS, 74; Mr Piers Paul Read, author, 57; Mr Viv Richards, cricketer, 46; the Earl of Snowdon, 68; Sir David Spedding, diplomat, 55; Dame Margaret Weston, former director, Science Museum, 72; Professor Gordon Willey, American archaeologist, 85; Mr David J. Wright, chief executive, GKN Westland, 58.

TOMORROW: Major-General Sir Christopher Airy, royal equerry, 64; Mr Nicolas Bevan, Speaker's Secretary, 56; Sir Julian Bullard, diplomat, 70; Professor Sir Donald Campbell, former President, Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, 68; Sir Anthony Caro, sculptor, 74; Major Graham T. Dunnett, Lord-Lieutenant of Caithness, 69; Mr Phil Edmonds, former cricketer, 47; Mr Michael Grade, chairman, First Leisure, 55; Lord Hurd of Westwell, CH, 68; Mr Michael Inchbald, designer, 78; Miss Ann Jenner, ballerina, 54; Mr Irek Mukhamedov, ballet dancer, 38; Miss Lynn Redgrave, actress, 55; Rabbi Dr Jonathan Sacks, Chief Rabbi, 50; Miss Lynn Seymour, ballerina, 59; Professor S.K. Smith, obstetrician and gynaecologist, 47; Professor Norman Stone, modern historian, 57; Mr Robert Tear, tenor, 59; the Ven P.R. Turner, Chaplain-in-Chief, RAF, 56; Sir John Ward, 73; Mr David Wilkie, swimmer, 44.

ON THIS DAY

March 7, 1990

All over the country anti-poll tax protesters demonstrated, some violently, as councils met to decide how much they would charge in the following year.

Battles over poll tax rage in town halls

By Craig Seton, Ray Clancy and Geoff King

TOWN halls across the country were besieged by thousands of protesters last night as anti-poll tax demonstrations — many organized by Militant — erupted into violence.

Mounted police charged a crowd in Bristol, where a policeman was punched and kicked unconscious; in Norwich, the council meeting was abandoned after more than a thousand protesters gathered outside the City Hall; and in Birmingham a furious crowd stormed into the Council House chamber.

Police reinforcements were also called to Bradford, Reading, Weston-super-Mare and Exeter. In Maidenhead, demonstrators tore up completed registration forms to disrupt collection.

With evidence emerging of Militant involvement in orchestrating the demonstrations, the Labour Party moved swiftly last night to denounce the violence, recognizing that it could divert attention from the Government's problems over the tax. Mr Neil Kinnock's office said people could not be members of Militant and the Labour Party, and a party spokesman said: "Labour has always advocated peaceful means of protest against the poll tax. We are opposed to any form of violence." Meanwhile in the Commons, the Prime Minister renewed her assault on "profligate" councils, insisting: "The lesson will be learnt that it is the Labour authorities which are high spenders and the Conservative ones which look after constituents."

The 600 demonstrators in Bristol had at first simply made speeches and shouted abuse, but when councillors refused to answer questions on the steps of the Council House violence erupted.

About 80 protesters chanting militant slogans crowded into the public gallery and the meeting was adjourned for an hour while order was restored. The police said the crowd then paraded around the city centre causing "havoc" before returning to the chamber where a charge of £490 was set — £200 above the government recommendation.

Two protesters were released after being cautioned, while 13 others were expected to face charges for public order offences, assault and assaulting a police officer.

The biggest demonstration of the night was at Norwich, where four people were arrested after windows in the City Hall were broken. Police used tables and chairs to barricade doors inside the building and the meeting was eventually abandoned after being brought to a halt by protesters throwing agendas from the public gallery.

In Birmingham, demonstrators forced their way into the council chamber after a 10-minute fight with police and some began punching and hitting out at councillors.

Mr David Green, aged 18, an Oxford University student researcher for the Conservative Party, was punched in the face and fell to the ground. Miss Justine Nicholas, another Tory worker, also fell to the floor in the mêlée.

The meeting was suspended for 15 minutes and after it resumed, with the chamber doors locked, the angry scenes continued in the public gallery and outside. Protesters were chased along corridors and extra police were called.

In Reading, Berkshire, five people were arrested and three injured...



At Bristol anti-poll tax demonstrators climbed up the wall to protest against an unpopular charge

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I shall betroth you to myself forever, bestowing righteousness and justice, loyalty and love; I shall betroth you to myself, making you faithful, and you will know the Lord. Hosea 2 : 19,20

BIRTHS

CLINCH - On 6th March in Sussex, to Judith (née Clarke) and Mark, a son, Oliver Jake Lister, a brother for Alasdair and Max.

DOWNES - On 5th March 1998, to Michael and Keeley, a daughter, Abigail Jane.

EVANS - On 2nd March, to Emma (née Gunn) and Sam, a daughter, Fenella Victoria Ann, a sister for Bertie, Rory and Alexander.

FARLEY - On 2nd March 1998, to Collette and Sean, a son, George Patrick.

GEORGE - On March 4th 1998, to Jane (née Jarvis) and Jimmy, beautiful twins, a son and daughter, Rupert William and Charlotte Katherine.

HELMBRECHT - On March 4th at The Portland Hospital, to Theresa and Steven, a son, Brett Michael, a brother for Lauren.

LODGE - On 18th February 1998, to Julie (née Hunter) and Simon, a son, Frederick (Freddie) Samuel Barnaby, a brother for Thomas and Alice.

O'BRIEN - Cailin Alexandra born in Naples, Florida at 11.54 am on 26th February 1998 weighing 9lbs 13ozs and measuring 21 inches. Pink and beautiful with lots of hair, a daughter for Sue and Kevin and a sister to Christopher.

ROTHSCHILD - On February 22nd at The Portland Hospital, to Ann (née Johnstone) and Jeremy, a daughter, India Emma.

BIRTHS

SIMPSON - On March 5th at The Portland Hospital, to Jacqueline (née Dudley) and David, a beautiful daughter, Miranda Elizabeth Ellen, a sister for Theo.

RUBY ANNIVERSARIES

LENTON:LAY - On March 8th 1958. Happy Ruby Anniversary. Best wishes, Tom, Joy, Donna, Tim and James.

DEATHS

BOOTH - Peacefully at Chorleywood, on March 5th, William Robert, aged 92. Beloved husband of Ann, loving and dearly loved father, grandfather and great-grandfather. Formerly of Tate & Lyle and for many years associated with the Baptist Union. Funeral Service at Ruislip Baptist Church, West Way on Friday March 13th at 2 pm followed by private cremation. Enquiries to Ellement tel: 0181 866 0324.

BOYS-STONES - Anne peacefully at home on March 6th 1998 aged 69. Beloved wife of Claude, much loved mother and grandmother. Private cremation. No flowers.

DEATHS

COWLING - Doris Margaret retired Baptist Missionary, widow of the Rev. R.C. Cowling and beloved mother of Alan, Ruth and Marion, died peacefully on February 23rd aged 93 years. A Memorial Service will be held at 11 am on March 28th at Amersham Free Church, Woodside Road, Amersham-on-the-Hill, Bucks. Donations to the Baptist Missionary Society direct or c/o Arnold Funeral Service, 891 London Road, Loudwater, High Wycombe, HP10 9TB.

DAVISON - Nancy Kathleen beloved mother of Paddy. Peacefully on 3rd March 1998, The Times Crossword completed and her sherry glass drained. Memorial Services Salisbury (Wiltshire) and Johannesburg (South Africa) Tuesday 17th March. Tel: 01934 822432.

DUTHIE - Alexander J.L. (Sandy) on Tuesday 3rd March 1998, husband of Daphne, father of Elizabeth, Alexandra, Victoria and the late Simon. Son of Jack and Dandy Duthie. Funeral at 2pm on Tuesday 17th March at Holy Trinity Parish Church, Roehampton, London SW15. No flowers, but donations if desired, to The Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths, 14 Halkin Street, London SW1X 7DP.

EDWARDS - Edward (Ted) a former R.S.M. of the 1st Battalion of the Welsh Guards died on March 4th aged 85 years. Beloved Husband of the late Doris and an adored Father and Grandfather. Funeral Private. All enquiries to Harvey Bros. of Kirby Cane. Tel: 01508 518663.

FRANKL - Zoltan, M.D., D.D.S., D.S., BSc (Hungary), F.I.C.D. (England), F.A.S.S. (USA). Former Associate Professor of Oral Surgery, University of Budapest. Author of 82 scientific publications and an autobiography. Peacefully, at home on 5th March 1998 after a long illness, which he fought to the end with his usual indomitable spirit. His two greatest loves were his family and his profession as an oral surgeon. He was born 6th August 1907 in Kiskunhalas, Hungary, into a poor Jewish family. He survived two world wars and internment in Mauthausen concentration camp, where his skill and energy saved many lives. He left Budapest with his family in 1957 following the Revolution, to make a fresh start in London. His determination led to a successful career in Harley Street where he worked until his retirement at the age of 82. He continued to write and lecture on oral surgery well into retirement. He finished his last article, a few days before he died. His beloved wife Anuci died in 1988. He is survived by his son Andrew, his daughter Vera, his grandchildren, Nicholas, Annabelle, Anna and Mischa, son-in-law Etienne, daughter-in-law Zsuzsi and many friends. He had a huge personality and is unforgettable. Service at Golders Green Crematorium East Wing, on Monday 9th March 1998 at 3.45 pm. No flowers please, but donations may be made to Imperial Cancer Research at P.O. Box 123, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London WC2A 3PX.

GOLDUP - Margaret (Peggy) suddenly at home on 28th February 1998. Widow of John, loving mother of Angela and Jason, dear grandmother of Lauren, Lois and Luke, much loved sister of Joan and Charles. Funeral Service at St Mary's, Lamberhurst, Kent on Wednesday 11th March at 2pm. Flowers to R.R. Hickmott & Son, 41 Grove Hill Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, tel: (01892) 522462.

HOLT - Nancy, on 5th March 1998, aged 88, peacefully at home in Radlett. Widow of Philip and much loved mother of Brian and Geoffrey, proud grandmother and great-grandmother. Funeral at Golders Green Crematorium on Tuesday 10th March at 12.45 pm. No flowers. Donations in her name if desired to Heart Foundation or Cancer Research.

MacGREGOR - Dr. James (Jim) FRCP, FRCPE, after a short illness, in Cape Town on 5th March, aged 86. Dearly loved father of Sue and Kirsty and beloved Grampa to Emily, Suzanna and Isobel. A Memorial Meeting is being held at Kirstenbosch, Cape.

MACLEOD MATTHEWS - Francis Spencer, beloved husband of Vanessa. Died tragically in London on 4th March 1998. Funeral at Chenies Parish Church, Bucks, at 4 pm on Thursday 12th March. Family flowers only. Any donations to Greenpeace c/o Peddle & Co., 10 Moneyhill Parade, Uxbridge Road, Rickmansworth, Herts. WD3 2BE.

McFARLAND - Robert George, of Bateau Bay, Australia, and late of Banstead, England. Peacefully on March 5th after a long illness. Husband of devoted wife Olive. Will be sadly missed. Funeral 4.30pm on Thursday 12th March at Randalls Crematorium, Leatherhead. Family flowers only.

TOWNSEND - Donald Stephen BSc CEng FIMechE FIMarE FInstMC Hon Fellow C and G of Lon Inst, on 1st March at the Martlets Hospice, Hove. Beloved husband of Margaret, much loved father to Roger, Michael, Christopher and Lois and proud grandfather of Claire, Lucy, Nicholas, James, Natalie, Jenna, Leona and Clara. Private cremation. Thanksgiving Service at Lewes United Reformed Church on Wednesday 11th March at 11.30 am. Family flowers only. Donations if desired to Martlets Hospice c/o Cooper & Son, 42 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 2DD, (01273) 475557.

TUDWAY - Winifred Mary peacefully on March 1st at Kenilworth Manor Nursing Home, Kenilworth, beloved and devoted wife of the late Robert Christie Tudway and much loved by her family and friends. Funeral Service to be held at Oxford Crematorium on Friday March 13th at 2 pm. Family flowers only please but donations if wished to Friends of the Bristol Oncology Centre, Horfield Road, Bristol BS2 8ED.

VOYSEY - Elisabeth, daughter of Annesley and Phyllis Voysey, granddaughter of C.F.A. Voysey, peacefully in Bromley Hospital, March 6th.

WEBB - On March 5th, at Burrswood Nursing Home, Anthony aged 88. Beloved husband of Diana, father of Amanda and Simon and grandfather of Dominique. Funeral Service at St Augustines Church, Tunbridge Wells on Wednesday March 11th at 10.30 am. Family flowers only. Donations to Hospice in the Weald may be sent c/o R.R. Hickmott & Son, 41 Grove Hill Road, Tunbridge Wells, TN1 1SD.

WELLS - Alex peacefully on March 3rd 1998, loving wife of the late Harold, mother of Frankie and David and grandmother of Mark, Beverly and Zoe. Fondly remembered by Ian and Sue and Betty Ann and their families. Funeral Service at Guildford Crematorium on March 11th at 2 pm. No flowers please. Donations if desired to Multiple Sclerosis Society c/o Cranleigh Funerals, tel: (01483) 275758.

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OBITUARIES

JO FLOYD

Jo Floyd, chairman of Christie's, 1974-88, died on February 20 aged 74. He was born on May 12, 1923.

Jo Floyd was chairman of Christie's at a time of enormous though unsteady growth. Standing an imposing 6ft 4in, he liked to give the impression that the finer points of the art market had passed him by — that he was a gentleman *only pretending* to be an auctioneer, but this was far from the truth.

In all he did, Floyd's first consideration was that everyone around him should have as much fun as he did. He extended this principle from his time at Eton to his working life at Christie's and to his golf.

John Anthony Floyd was the son of Lieutenant-Colonel Arthur Floyd. In 1941 he joined the King's Royal Rifle Corps and saw service in North-West Europe. It is said that he landed on the Normandy beaches with his golf clubs strapped to the barrel of one of the six-pounders in his anti-tank platoon.

After the war he joined Christie's, where his cousin, Sir Henry Floyd, had been a partner for many years. In those days the big auction houses took the view that their young recruits were lucky to have their jobs, and salaries were very low. He began on the front counter at King Street, where he showed himself able to rub along with everyone he met. He was soon put in charge of the furniture department, and became a partner in 1954.

In 1964 Sotheby's acquired the largest American auctioneer, Parke-Bernet, and it became apparent that Christie's, too, had to enter the American market. Floyd was sent to New York to organise its office there, although auctions did not begin there until 1977. By the end of the 1970s the company's turnover was higher in America than in Britain.





Floyd and Velázquez's portrait of *Juan de Pareja*, sold at Christie's for what was then a world record of 2,200,000 guineas in 1970

In 1970, Floyd successfully negotiated the sale of Velázquez's portrait of *Juan de Pareja*. Christie's had sold the picture in 1801 for 39 guineas; this time it fetched 2,200,000 guineas, an astonishing world record for any work of art, which stood for ten years. Floyd became deputy chairman in 1973 (and soon abolished the convention of taking bids in guineas). In that year the business went public, with the shares being ten times oversubscribed. He was elevated to chairman, in succession to Peter Chance, in 1974.

A difficult period was to follow. Christie's opened its South Kensington rooms, but the total volume of sales was down: there were staff redundancies and even the directors took "voluntary" cuts in salary. In 1975, blaming spiralling costs, Christie's and Sotheby's introduced the buyer's premium of 10 per cent — not instead of, but as well as, the seller's premium. Dealers were outraged by the new impost and called for a boycott. With goods going tantalisingly cheaply, however, the boycott did not last.

Instead, the Society of London Art Dealers and the British Antique Dealers' Association brought a case against Christie's and Sotheby's for collusion in the introduction of the premium, and asked for an injunction against it. They finally reached an out-of-court settlement, brokered by Sir Patrick Neill at Claridge's in September 1980. The Office of Fair Trading was also invoked, but nothing was done. In December 1981, Floyd announced that the buyer's premium would be reduced from 10 to 8 per cent — but the seller's premium was increased from 10 to 12½ per cent. It was not a climbdown but a marketing assault on Sotheby's.

During the late 1970s, the art market picked up again. But the auction boom during the Reagan-Thatcher years was to dwarf anything that had gone before. In 1984, 71 Old Master drawings from Chatsworth realised £21 million. The following year Mantegna's *Adoration of the Magi* went for more than £7 million.

Then came the two remarkable Van Goghs, with Christie's *Sunflowers* famously taking the world record price for a painting to £22.5 million in 1987. The commission on this single painting was £2.25 million (though a dispute with the vendors rumbled on for several years). Eight months later, *Irises* at Sotheby's topped it, the hammer falling at $49 million (£27,443,000).

In the 1988-89 season, the two houses between them sold 402 works of art at more than $1 million each. Then in the single month of November 1989, that price barrier was broken by 305 works. And the following May, Christie's knocked down Van Gogh's *Portrait of Dr Gachet* for $75 million, still the world record. Floyd was a family friend of the vendor.

There were, however, bad moments. In 1981 seven out of eight *Impressionists, with reserves totalling* $10 million, failed to sell in New York. David Bathurst, Christie's American chairman, had announced that three of the paintings had sold and when the truth came out he lost his auctioneer's licence and resigned. In 1985, Christie's failed to identify a Gainsborough, and the unknown portrait was knocked down for £800.

Floyd was at his best when things were going wrong, always keeping calm and retaining his humour under the most difficult circumstances.

As well as auctioning to the highest bidder, Floyd helped to find the right buyer for several works of art of national importance. In 1960 he helped to negotiate the National Gallery's purchase of Rembrandt's *Belshazzar's Feast*, and in 1975 Gainsborough's portrait of David Garrick was one of three saved for the nation from the Swinton estate. Then in the 1980s a Constable became the most expensive private treaty sale to date: £10 million to the National Gallery.

Floyd retired as Christie's chairman in 1988, to be succeeded by Lord Carrington. Turnover was by then £600 million (though Sotheby's had reached £850 million). He remained on the board for four more years.

In retirement Floyd continued to enjoy his golf, particularly foursomes. In 1961 he had become godfather to Earl Spencer's daughter Diana, later the Princess of Wales.

He is survived by his wife Margaret, and two daughters, one of whom works at Christie's.

LUCIEN BODARD

Lucien Bodard, French war correspondent and prizewinning novelist, died in Paris on March 1 aged 84. He was born in Chungking, China, on January 9, 1914.



LUCIEN BODARD could evoke the splendours and wars of Asia in a manner that led French critics to compare him to other literary adventurers such as Albert Londres, Blaise Cendrars and Joseph Kessel. His postwar dispatches from Indo-China and Algeria were read by the two million readers of *France Soir*.

Late in life, Bodard switched to the full-time writing of historical novels set in China and thinly disguised autobiographical books that won him another large audience, as well as both the Prix Interallié and the Prix Goncourt.

Bodard was rarely in the front-line. He had contacts with the French High Command but, apart from an occasional helicopter trip during the American involvement in Vietnam, he covered most conflicts from the bar of the best hotel in town. He was of the school of "Never let facts get in the way of a good story". Eager young correspondents, fresh from the war zone, would brief him and then Bodard's literary touch and his sense of the human interest side of war did the rest.



He was a large, shambling man with the inscrutable manner of a mandarin from his Chinese birthplace. His female admirers were numerous, but, aside from his son Julien, born of his first marriage, his true love was words. At the time of his death, he had just finished a biography of Madame Mao.

Bodard was the son of Albert Bodard, French consul in prewar Chungking, and his adolescent years in the turbulent provincial capital saw the flowering of his lifelong love affair with Chinese culture and history. In addition, his witnessing of revolts and public beheadings nurtured a desire in him to become a journalist. He achieved his ambition after the Second World War and a stay in London where he arrived via the so-called Zone Libre in France and North Africa.

Pierre Lazareff, legendary Editor-in-Chief of *France Soir*, recognised his human touch in his first articles and sent him to the Far East where he covered the slow fall of French Indo-China to the Vietminh over a seven-year period. Generals would slip him scoops, particularly if they denigrated other generals, but Bodard's desk was usually the hotel bar. He later served five years in Hong Kong, then in Algeria. He covered many wars without risking his neck, although he took helicopter trips next to General William Westmoreland, the American commander in Vietnam.

Max Clos, a foreign correspondent with *Le Figaro*, recalls Bodard in Santo Domingo in 1965 asking him what he had seen after he returned to the hotel from the scene of fighting involving right-wing forces backed by US Marines and rebel militia. "Go see for yourself," replied an exasperated Clos, a friend who had served with Bodard in Indo-China. "Mon pauvre Max, without having seen it, I'll tell the story better," replied Bodard. And it was true in practically all arenas.

He settled scores with his father, who had abandoned his adored mother, in his book *Monsieur le Consul*, which won the 1973 Interallié prize. *Anne-Marie*, a book based on his mother, won the Prix Goncourt in 1981. In all, he wrote thirty books.

He is survived by his second wife and son.

HENRY LIVINGS

Henry Livings, dramatist and actor, died on February 20 aged 68. He was born on September 20, 1929.



HENRY LIVINGS reached his apogee as a writer for the theatre in the heady days of the "New Drama" which followed in the wake of John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*. But critics and the public never knew quite what to make of him. It often seemed that he was fated to be produced in the wrong places at the wrong times. For he was essentially a popular dramatist who should have been enjoying lowbrow success at the Whitehall, rather than being commissioned early on by the Royal Shakespeare Company and taken as an intellectual.

That is not to say that his plays did not have serious aspects or intellectual depth. Their obsessive theme was the haphazard progress through life of nature's misfits. His heroes lived in worlds of their own, or completely lacked the power to control their environment, or were simply daft as a brush; they would have been misfits wherever they began. In consequence, society is nearly always criticised in his plays by juxtaposing the reality we all see with the way it looks to an observer from China or the Moon.

As a rule, Livings's vehicle was farce, his first intention to make audiences laugh. But there were also plays in which the theme of the misfit was treated in more obviously dramatic terms. His television play *Jim All Alone* took its theme (like James Saunders's contemporary *Next Time I'll Sing to You*) from Raleigh Trevelyan's book *A Hermit Disclosed*, and managed its hero's withdrawal into solitude brilliantly. *Kelly's Eye* is the story of a stupid man and an inexperienced girl caught in a situation too complex for them to understand — too complex for anyone to understand fully, indeed, since the tragic denouement takes place, quite coincidentally, on September 3, 1939.

Henry Livings was born into the North Country working class, and from the beginning he saw himself as a working-class entertainer. After grammar school he read French and Spanish at Liverpool University but left after two years. He did his National Service in the RAF (which was to provide background for his play *Nil Carborundum*), and did various jobs before finding his niche as an actor in 1956 in the controlled anarchy of Joan Littlewood's Theatre Workshop at Stratford East. Inspired, like so many of the Theatre Workshop company, to have a go himself, he wrote a curious play called *Jack's Horrible Luck*, a loosely strung series of episodes involving a naïve young sailor ashore in Liverpool exploring a nightmarishly funny underworld of buskers and meths drinkers. This he eventually sold to the BBC, but it was not produced until after *Stop It, Whoever You Are* had been staged at the Arts in 1961 and had some favourable, if rather bemused, notices. This latter was the farcical epic life of a lavatory attendant.

Subsequent plays included *Big Soft Nellie*, which concerns a hopeless mother's boy whose ambitions to present himself as a hard man are dashed when he cannot even get himself put in prison for robbery because everyone conspires to be "kind" and ignores his lapse.

In this and *Nil Carborundum* Livings perfected his personal technique of play construction, that of the seven-minute take. His theory was that, possibly because of television, no theatrical audience could pay attention to one thing for more than seven minutes, so it was best to require them to do no more than that, laying the seven-minute movements end-to-end.

For many critics this was as good (or as bad) as no construction at all. But Livings knew what he was doing, and scored his biggest success using just the same technique in his Royal Shakespeare commission, *Eh?* (1964), which the director, Peter Hall, subsequently filmed as *Work is a Four-Letter Word*. This is quintessential Livings. The play's hero is interested only in growing hallucinogenic mushrooms, and takes a job as a factory boilerman in order to find peace and a suitable environment.

Although miscast and unsympathetically produced, *Eh?* marked the high-point of Livings's career as a dramatist. In later years he withdrew to the North and fought shy of the London theatre with its myriad traps for the unwary — thus taking, perhaps, his own underlying message to heart. Instead, he wrote columns about the eccentricities of local life for the newspapers (he was a mercilessly precise observer), and books about such topics as the local brass bands.

He married Fanny Carter in 1957, but they separated. He lived with Myra Brenner from 1982. She survives him, along with a son and a daughter from his marriage.

PERSONAL COLUMN

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Dated this 3 day of March 1998

D. J. Fallon

c/o Ernst & Young

Basbett House

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London SE1 7EU

PUBLIC NOTICES

BROOKER, VIOLET PEGGY MAY BROOKER late of Croydon, Surrey died there on 5th May 1995. The kin of the above named are requested to apply to the Administrators of the Estate, M G Matthews, Pantiles Cottage, Tatsfield Lane, Longcross Green, Tunbridge Wells, TN3 9JT by 30th April 1998.

TRUSTEE ACTS

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to s27 of the TRUSTEE Act, 1925 that any person having a CLAIM against or an INTEREST in the ESTATE of any of the deceased person's whose names, addresses and descriptions are set out below is hereby required to send particulars in writing of his claim or interest to the person or persons mentioned in relation to the deceased person concerned before the date specified, after which date the estate of the deceased will be distributed by the personal representatives among the persons entitled thereto having regard only to the claims and interests of which they have had notice.

CROSTON, James Charles Gerald of 25 Hazmall Road, Pulham, London SW6 7BA died on 18th January 1998. Particulars to Underwood & Co Solicitors of 40 Welbeck Street, London W1M 8LN before 8th May 1998.

LESLIE RUTH (SHIRGEL) MOORE of 14, Chelsea Terrace, London, SW1 8JH. Died 7th April 1997. Particulars to: Mitchens de Rayn, 21 Southampton Row WC1B 5HS on or before 8th May 1998.

NIGHTINGALE, EVA LOUISA of Emmanuel House, 6/10 Kendrick Road, Reading, Berkshire (formerly of 27B Silverdale Road, Burgess Hill, Sussex) died on 31st January 1998. Particulars to Messrs Sergeant & Sheppard Solicitors of 150 Friar Street, Reading RG1 1HE before 5th June 1998.

SIDNEY HENRY THOMAS KIRKHILL SMITH late of 16 Kilnacre Court, Station Approach, Woking, Surrey who died on 18th March 1997 particulars to Clyde & Co, Beaufort House, Chertsey Street, Guildford GU1 4HA on or before 11th May 1998, (quoting reference AES).

WARNER, MARY of 89 Henfield Drive, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire died on 28th December 1997. Particulars to Messrs Sergeant & Sheppard Solicitors of 150 Friar Street, Reading, RG1 1HE before 8th June 1998.

CORBETT, Mrs Ida Blanche, of 297 London Road, Woodley, Reading died on 30th January 1998. Particulars to Sergeant & Sheppard Solicitors of 150 Friar Street, Reading RG1 1HE before 14th May 1998.

LEGAL, PUBLIC, COMPANY & PARLIAMENTARY NOTICES

TO PLACE NOTICES FOR THIS SECTION PLEASE TELEPHONE

0171-680 6878

OR

FAX: 0171 481 9313

Notices are subject to confirmation and should be received by 2.30pm two days prior to insertion.

MILESTONES



Dermot Morgan, Irish actor and comedian, died on March 1 aged 45. He was born on March 3, 1952.

Dermot Morgan played the ill-starred eponymous priest in Channel 4's sophisticated hit comedy *Father Ted*. The Roman Catholic Church, along with Irish politics, had been a focus of his sharp satire as a stand-up comedian and on the radio long before *Father Ted*.

Obituary published on March 2.

Peter Livesey, rock climber, died on February 26 aged 54. He was born in Huddersfield on September 12, 1943.

As well as pioneering many new rock-climbing routes in Europe and America, Peter Livesey was the "father" of modern, athletic climbing. He began as a track athlete, but then took up caving and diving, and gave up his job in electrical engineering to become a teacher of outdoor pursuits. Until then few climbers had been athletically fit, but Livesey developed a systematic training regime for climbers, intended to raise aerobic efficiency and enhance strength and endurance.

Obituary published on March 3.

Professor Martin Hollis, FBA, philosopher, died on February 27 aged 59. He was born on March 14, 1938.

At the heart of Martin Hollis's work lay an abiding concern with the nature of rationality. His belief in the powers of reason was unshakeable, and he was never in the least abashed by critics who complained that the strength of his commitment sometimes seemed unreasonable. A pupil of A. J. Ayer's, he came to believe that reason is the fundamental means by which the self realises and expresses itself in the social world. He was an implacable and vocal enemy of every form of epistemological and cultural relativism. In particular, he wrote about the application of rational choice theories to sociology, international relations and moral and political philosophy. He taught at the University of East Anglia for thirty years, and had held the chair of philosophy there since 1982.



Obituary published on March 4.

Fred Friendly, American television producer, died on March 3 aged 82. He was born on October 30, 1915.

A pioneer of television journalism and a fierce upholder of the integrity of his profession, Fred Friendly was a giant of American broadcasting. The programmes he produced with Ed Murrow in the decade after the Second World War set fresh standards for current affairs broadcasting. In the early 1950s, their programme *See It Now* famously campaigned against Joe McCarthy's witch-hunt against "communists" in American public life, exposing many of the charges as untrue. Friendly was president of CBS News from 1964 to 1966, but resigned when the network refused to broadcast Senator Fulbright's Vietnam committee hearings, preferring to rerun *I Love Lucy* under pressure from advertisers. He continued to preach the importance of television, and to urge its responsibilities.

Obituary published on March 6.



Equities bounce back

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
599	407½	Allied Domecq	562	-8	4.3	14.4
626	295	Bulmer (HP)	332½		5.6	10.3
73½	28	Burn Stewart	29½		14.4	10.3
667½	432	Diageo	655	+15	2.7	20.0
1040	795	Glenmorangie A	830		2.0	15.9
360	270	Highland Dist	271½		4.1	12.6
336	157	Matthew Clark	194		12.9	6.3
109½	45	Lloydon W	49½		8.0	
2003½	1369½	SA Breweries	1659¾	-16½	2.2	

BANKS

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
1521½	918½	ABN-AMRO	1253½	-16½	2.5	18.3
1545	710	Abbey Natl	1175	-27	3.3	17.7
1032	532½	Alliance & Leic	905½	-1	2.9	18.0
796½	556½	Allied Irish	763½	+8½	2.4	
516½	363½	Aus New Z	404	-1	5.0	
4953½	2875	Bank America£	4653¾	-21½		
749	291½	Bank Scotland	660	-28	1.7	18.3
1506	973½	Barclays†	1770	-28	2.6	17.2
1159	517½	Bk of Ireland	1140	+9	1.8	25.0
8057½	6005½	Citicorp	7946½	-31½		
1758½	1264½	Commerzbk	1616½		2.8	
862½	298½	Dai Ichi Kan £	512½	+12½	0.8	
4597½	2709½	Deutsche Bk	4100	-21½	1.5	
1300	798½	Espirito Santo	1190½	+3½	3.1	
947½	138	Fuji Bank Y	518½	+38½	0.8	
1369½	1272½	HSBC	1954	+46	3.4	14.6
1258½	1326	HSBC HP	1770	+55	3.6	13.9
1060	507	Halifax	937	+14	2.4	24.7
842½	483½	Irish Perm†	816		2.0	
975	424	Lloyds TSB†	909	+29	2.4	24.2
1008	659½	Nat Aust Bk	820	-10½	4.8	
1208	663½	Nat West†	1080	-27	2.7	23.0
665½	449	Northern Rock	616½	-5	2.2	23.0
1000	508	Ryl Bk Scot	903	-19	3.0	17.7
1095½	526	Stand Chart	856	+18	3.7	13.6
£163½	£164½	Wells Fargo	£164¾		1.9	
426½	315½	Westpac	418½	-4½	3.5	
400	267½	Woolwich	370	-2	3.3	18.3

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
1050	699½	Bass▼	1000	+10	3.4	17.9
68½	45½	Brit for the Bdr	58½		4.1	17.5
205	132½	Burtonwd Brw	152½		5.7	13.4
155½	110	City Centre Rest	115		2.7	17.9
955	575½	Compass Grp	917	-19	1.3	31.9
325	250	Eldridge P A	298½		2.6	15.1
307½	221	Enterprise Inns	302½		3.1	16.7
485	412	Fuller Sm A	462½		2.8	14.9
586	310	Greenalls Grp	433½	-2	4.8	10.8
770	610	Greene King	717½		2.9	14.7
237½	152½	Grosvenor Inns†	226½		3.5	29.7
321½	218½	Groupe Chez Ger	321½		1.2	25.9
298½	213½	Hardy Hanson	216½		6.6	9.4
2850	2005	Hall J	2015		3.7	11.3
78	56	Inn Business†	65½		3.6	
357	280	Mansfield	282½		3.2	11.7
315½	252	Marston Thmp	268½	+2½	3.9	9.5
615	427½	Morland	427½		3.9	10.8
330½	210	Old Eng Pub	336	+9½	0.9	26.8
47½	19½	Paramount	25½	-½		
853	527½	PizzaExpress†	802	-1	0.6	36.2
327½	302½	Ramsdens (H)†	325	+5	1.9	30.2
378½	262½	Regent Inns†	335½	-2	1.3	24.0
186	102½	SFI	172½		0.6	30.1
937	566	Scot & New	858	+5	3.2	17.2
305	222½	Vaux Group	229	-6	6.1	9.7
339½	221	Wetherspoon JD	284		0.9	32.8
1020	620	Whitbread	1012	+6	3.0	17.3
706½	430	Wolvrhmptn D	507½	+1	4.6	11.5
416½	279½	Yates Bros	408	-2	0.9	29.4
702½	615	Young A	642½		3.0	28.8

BUILDING MATERIALS

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
58½	33	Aggregate Inds	56	+1	4.5	25.0
358	290	BPB	349	-13	3.5	16.0
110½	88½	Baggeridge Brk	98½		4.4	12.3
64½	27½	Blockleys	53½		0.3	
452	271½	Blue Circle	371	+3	4.3	15.5
113½	78½	Breedon PLC	108½		6.0	14.8
180	119	Br Dredging	180	+1½	4.3	13.7
612½	592½	CRH	812½	-30	1.3	
59½	42½	Caradhead Rby	55½		7.0	5.5
192½	106½	Cape	112½		6.7	8.8
273	158½	Caradon	201	+5	5.9	9.9
133½	98½	Caradon pf	111½		8.2	
130½	50	Chiltern Gp	130½	+½	4.2	
272½	201½	Dyson (J&J)	218½		3.3	13.0
145	105	Dyson A	116½		6.2	7.0
120	43½	Enviclone	58	-5½		
230	147	Ennm	168½		7.6	
105½	83½	Gibbs & Dandy	104½		4.6	11.1
182½	119	Graham Grp	177	+½	4.3	
292½	187½	Halstead (J)	247½		4.9	17.5
334½	245	Hanson	332	+9	4.6	3.4
297½	179	Hepworth	235	+11	6.6	16.1
145	72½	Hewetson	121½		6.6	8.0
268	190½	Heywd Wms	223		7.7	9.2
75½	43	Ibstock	54½		4.6	20.5
530	275	Johnson	315		4.8	11.5
107½	62½	Lilleshall	93½	-½	6.9	
137	82½	Marley	101½	-½	5.6	9.9
140½	117½	Marshalls†	133½	+3½	4.9	16.7
4514	328½	Meyer Intl	490	-3	3.8	14.9
95½	63½	Norcros	67½		3.5	14.8
169	103½	Pilkington	121		4.8	15.5
264½	168½	Polypipe	185½	+1	2.2	13.9
27	12½	Quiniprop	17	-6½		14.5
1147½	740½	RMC Gp	985	-15	3.2	13.8
114½	79½	Rubercid	81½	+½	7.5	15.1
143½	91½	Rugby Group	123½	-½	3.8	24.2
113	79½	Russell (A)	90½		4.3	12.2
346½	192½	SIG	221½	+2½	4.2	11.3
3½	1½	SNP	2½			15.0
237½	211½	Sharpe & Fisher	225½		3.3	14.7
25	9½	Spring Ram	19½	-1½	0.6	
137½	144½	Streamline Hldgs	191½		5.7	11.7
134	93	Tarmac	105		6.5	13.3
140	97½	Titon	86½		7.5	9.2
590	435½	Travis Perkins	579		2.2	20.3
73½	34½	Tudor	73½		4.5	14.6
294½	157½	Ultraframe	282½		1.5	29.9
564	410	Wolseley	556	-3	2.6	17.9

CHEMICALS

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
175½	134½	Albright & Wil	172	+4½	4.7	17.9
254½	39	Allied Colloids	203½		2.0	27.5
125	109	Amber Ind	110		6.5	8.7
117½	91½	Amberley Gp	95½		2.2	16.1
2321½	1865½	BASF DM	2140½	-3½	2.6	
1155	850	BOC	996	+10	3.4	17.0
379½	245	BTP	356½		4.2	17.1
2529½	1934½	Bayer DM50	2487½	+6½	2.3	
127½	65½	Brent Chems	120	+2	3.4	12.8
289	195½	Br Vita	289	+13½	3.7	15.5
[illegible]	128	Brunner Mond	134½		9.3	7.2
315½	241½	Canning (W)	271		4.1	13.0
259½	149½	Cry Technology	187		2.6	36.1
[illegible]	[illegible]	Courtaulds	364½		4.5	15.6
[illegible]	[illegible]	Croda	425	-7	2.8	17.9
[illegible]	203½	Doeflex	294½		4.9	9.8
142½	107½	Elementis	134	-2½		21.7
320	[illegible]	Ellis & Everard	250		4.4	12.4
[illegible]	47½	Eve Colour	60		5.7	10.2
177½	91½	Greenall?	177½		4.9	12.0
[illegible]	[illegible]	Hickson	84½		1.2	
[illegible]	2553½	Hoechst	2225	+6½	2.6	
[illegible]	[illegible]	Holliday Chem	252		[illegible]	13.9
1195	621	ICI	1113	-20	3.9	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Inspec	225½	-1	3.3	10.0
[illegible]	[illegible]	Kalon	175		3.2	29.2
[illegible]	512½	Laporte	723½	-3	4.0	14.6
[illegible]	[illegible]	Macters	235		5.9	30.6
91	29	[illegible]	51½	-1	5.5	9.9
[illegible]	22	[illegible]	27½		[illegible]	3.0
[illegible]	[illegible]	Porvair	322	-2	[illegible]	
[illegible]	[illegible]	Scapa	130½	-½	3.3	10.7
[illegible]	[illegible]	Stirling?	19½		7.5	3.0
1350	1122½	Solvay? Chem	1661½	-19	0.4	29.6
[illegible]	147½	[illegible]	182½		2.5	21.9
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible] B	617½		5.3	11.0
[illegible]	156	[illegible]	227½	-2½	5.1	
[illegible]	264½	[illegible]	337½	-½	3.5	14.2

CONSTRUCTION

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
[illegible]	15	AAF Inds	30½	-1		
[illegible]	170	Abbey	235		3.8	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Allen	401		2.8	19.7
[illegible]	97½	Amec	152	-1½	3.4	
[illegible]	[illegible]	Amey	557½		3.3	20.5
367½	425	[illegible]	865		1.7	27.3
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	220		1.3	27.4
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	38½		4.9	9.5
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	20½	-1	5.7	12.7
[illegible]	45	Barratt	68½	-13½	2.7	15.9
[illegible]	201	Barratt Devs	263	-4½	4.2	13.5
[illegible]	[illegible]	Beazer	215		3.6	12.8
[illegible]	279½	Bellway	356	-1½	2.9	13.2
[illegible]	16	Bellwinch	29½			9.4
[illegible]	39	Ben Bailey	65½		3.1	9.2
[illegible]	580½	Berkeley Gp	704½	-2½	1.7	12.4
[illegible]	[illegible]	Bett Bros	162		5.3	9.9
[illegible]	202	Bilston?	270		3.9	10.5
[illegible]	148	Bovis Homes	225		5.1	10.2
[illegible]	97½	Bramston Hzl	114	-1½	3.2	15.2
[illegible]	27½	Brocklehurst?	28½	-1	3.7	7.0
153	105	Bryant†	143½	-1½	4.4	13.2
[illegible]	27½	[illegible]	115½	+1	4.1	7.3
[illegible]	2½	Campbell & Arm	4			
104½	53½	Carter T	103½	-5	7.3	
44	30	Cerdon	30			
164½	71	Costain	115½	-1	3.3	10.7
159½	30½	Crest Nicholson	119	-2½	4.0	5.9
104½	67½	[illegible]	106½		6.0	10.5
177½	147½	Eve Group†	162½		4.1	12.0
24	15½	Galliford	21½		6.2	12.7
1575	867½	Greene?	1075		2.2	17.6
225	125	Havelock Euro	153		1.7	10.0
184½	123	Howden Stuart	173	-1	2.5	22.3
29	15	Howard Hldgs	23		5.4	22.6
677	139½	Jarvis	596	-22	1.4	30.4
272½	151	Keller	210	-5	2.9	14.6
262½	187½	Kier	215½	-½	2.7	11.5
380	279	Laing (J)	337	+19	3.6	29.4
130½	112½	Laing 5½% Cv Pf	121½	+2	6.6	
14½	9½	Lovell (Y.J)	13	-½		
210½	156½	Maunders (J)	165½		4.9	10.1
167½	112½	McAlpine (A)	152	-1	5.5	32.8
139	95½	McCarthy & S	138½		2.7	12.9
97	62½	McInerney	97			
235½	157½	Morgan Sindall	233½	-1	4.3	
327½	234½	Mowlem Cons	326		2.7	17.3
144	77½	Mowlem (J)	95	-1	4.7	11
266	182½	Persimmon	241½	-7	5.0	12.1
102½	46	Peterhouse	80½		6.1	18.2
133	100	Prowting	117		2.7	13.6
144½	97½	Prowting	132½		4.0	12.2
186	137	Redrow	181		2.5	15.9
352½	215½	Spender?	287½		1.4	16.2
103	76	Swan Hill	86		3.8	
155½	116	Tay Homes	142½	+8	6.6	12.6
215	153	Taylor Woodrw	203		2.3	15.5
307	130	Tilbury Dougls	225		5.2	14.0
27½	13½	Try Group	25	-1½	3.7	
86	56½	Wardhone?	71		7.1	
155½	107½	Wainhomes	128½	-1	4.6	13.3
79½	36½	Ward Hldgs	52½		6.2	7.4
277½	224½	Westbury	276		3.7	13.7
14	7½	Wiggins	12½			18.7
191	139½	Wilson (C)	168	-1	3.7	17.0
619	471½	Wilson Bowdn	610½		2.2	16.0
135	92½	Wimpey G	130		5.6	10.5

DISTRIBUTORS

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
212½	143½	Acton Co Sps	201½		1.6	20.3
310	275	Adam & Harvey	311½		9.1	4.7
21½	6½	Alexanders	18½			
3½	1½	Allied Air? Eng	1½			68.6
530	470	BSS Group	425		6.2	12.8
19½	12½	Beaumg Power	16½	+1		
38½	34½	Bogod 'A'	34½		3.3	5.5
680	530	Brammer	552½		3.7	13.3
27	10½	Bridgend Gp	11½		2.2	52.5
119½	79	Brit Fittings	86½	-3½	6.5	6.9
365	300	Cathers	345		4.7	7.9
225	162½	Car Group	178½		3.3	16.7
172½	117½	Caverdale	135½		3.5	7.8
100	61½	Charles Sidney	87		4.5	12.4
58½	31½	Cook (DC)	45½		6.7	6.5
121	90½	Dag Motors	109	-3½	9.2	7.1
134½	102½	Dennans B	111½		3.4	8.7
400	215	Diploma	236½		7.7	9.6
511½	387½	Electrocomponts	503½	+10	2.0	27.1
76½	19½	Eurocopy†	20½		14.8	3.4
226½	117½	Eurodis Elect	170		3.9	29.2
105	76½	European Mo	96		8.2	7.8
300	213	Evans Halshaw	255	-1	8.1	
55½	39½	File Indmar	42½		10.0	8.9
400½	275	Foetsl Grp	399		2.6	15.8
34½	19½	Gardiner	24½		5.2	10.3
79½	57½	Clenchewton	64½	+½	3.0	10.5
111½	47½	Gowrings	111½	+7	3.5	18.5
18½	11	HR Owen	17½	+1½	5.2	11.8
374	284½	Headlam	347	+½	2.2	21.0
172	145	Holders Tech	150		5.4	13.2
240½	68½	ISA Intl	96½		4.4	7.4
308½	136½	Inchcape	232½	+1	5.5	27.2
72	49½	Jacks (Wm)	57½		5.4	7.4
395	214½	Kwik-Fit	395		1.9	21.7
490	316½	Lex Service	474½		4.7	11.8
122	97	Lookers	114		9.5	7.3
545	351	Menzies (John)	428½	-4	4.0	13.9
9	4	Micklam	4½		2.8	11.0
41½	10½	Midstates	17		3.5	
472	180	Norbain	250	+4½	4.4	10.1
281	114½	Northumbs	247½	-1	1.5	16.4
352½	285½	Parkco	322½	-2	3.4	
394½	249½	Pendragon	293½	+3	4.3	12.9
223½	167½	Perry Gp	185½	+3	6.2	8.2
761	372	Premier Farnell	404½	+3½	3.9	15.0
144½	116	Quicks Group	126½		7.4	8.4
357	230	REA	245		2.0	54.1
						66.9
2½	1½	Reace	2			
150½	31½	Ring	33½			
28	4½	Ronson	8	-1		
5½	1½	Ross Gp	4½	+½		
111½	78½	Ryland	107		5.3	
28	24	SEP Indl	28½	+2½	5.6	14.8
92½	16½	Salton	19		3.9	
57½	39½	Sedgemoor	50		4.2	12.6
243½	226½	Sylner	239½		3.6	11.2
415½	167½	Time Products	190	-1½	8.2	7.8
347	132½	Trust Motor Grp	202	+1	7.0	8.9
432	328	UNIECO	412½	+7½	1.8	22.0
105	59	United Oseas Gp	100	+1	0.5	20.2
362½	237½	Vardy (Reg)	269½	+3½	3.6	12.6
800	498½	WF Elec	766		2.6	23.5
41	25½	Wilshaw	38½		2.8	10.4
172½	111½	Wyko†	152	+½	2.7	14.3
159½	119½	Young (H)	143½		4.0	10.2

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
492½	300	Antofagasta	330		2.0	16.4
328	229	Ascot Hldgs	235	+½	2.8	10.3
917	509	Broken Hill	631	+20½	3.3	16.8
653	462	BAT	649	+10	5.0	16.0
60½	38½	Bnerley Inv	39½		8.3	9.2
266	167	Cookson	227½	-5½	4.1	11.9
240½	197½	Coralt	226		6.2	9.0
585	255½	DCC	550	-5	1.8	30.5
383	243½	Galaher	345	-4	7.0	10.8
667½	288	Hutch Whamp	398½	-1½	3.0	24.0
460	361	Imperial Tob	430	-3	6.4	10.3
522½	231½	Jardine Math	279½	-2	5.5	10.8
158½	74½	Lonrho†	93	+2½	6.4	17.0
175½	141½	McLeod Russel	161½		5.4	11.7
523½	388½	Powell Duffryn	521		6.0	13.6
197½	107½	Staveley	130		8.7	17.0
664½	258	Swire Pacific	343½	+3½	4.1	
397½	241½	TT Group	287	+2	3.5	11.7
374	252½	Tomkins†	363	-5	3.3	15.4
230	165	Unidare†	230		7.1	11.7
498	350	Wardle Storeys	455		5.6	13.9
387½	285½	Wassall	377½	+12	2.3	16.9
166½	122½	Whitecroft	135½		4.3	21.9

ELECTRICITY

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
497	184½	Br Energy	431	+19	4.1	42.5
845½	453½	Energy Group	840	+2½	3.1	16.9
377½	226	National Grid▼	331	-2	4.3	13.1
700	427	National Power	584½	+17½	6.0	7.9
805	565½	PowerGen	805	+15	4.1	12.3
577½	319½	Hydro-Electr	523	-2	4.3	12.0
578½	331½	Scottish Power†	507	-1	4.7	12.6
580	373½	Southern Elec	512½	-8	5.4	13.7
576	526	Yorkshire†	526	-1	5.1	36.8

ELECTRONIC & ELECT

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
493½	311½	Acal	329		3.8	10.7
240½	129½	Acorn	156½	+1		
937½	365	Admiral	937½	+2½	0.4	
78	22	Amstrad†	37		1.7	
48½	28½	Arlen	29½		5.1	7.7
164½	103½	Astec	126½		2.1	13.3
77½	43½	Azlan	60	+5½		
293½	127½	BICC	155	+5½	6.6	
75½	41½	Bealrs Hunter	70½	+1½	18.1	6.9
382½	205	Blick†	295		5.9	10.1
457½	232½	Bowthorpe	412½	+5	3.1	16.5
17	9	Bulgin A	15½	+½	6.0	18.1
205½	127½	CML Micro	199½	-2	3.8	23.8
39½	13½	Channel Hldgs†	15		13.8	4.7
43½	27½	Chloride	40	+½	2.2	9.6
109	54	Clayhithe	101½	-1	4.4	11.2
920	537½	Critchley	752½		2.2	20.2
388½	213½	Delta	292½		6.5	10.8
445	255	Domino†	435		3.6	15.2
95½	62½	Dowding Mills	73	-½	5.5	12.4
306	220	Druck	252½		0.9	27.2
5525	3316½	Electrolux B	4606½	+21½	2.1	
27½	17	Eressa	19½		2.6	12.9
3100	1771½	Ericsson B	2512½	+3½	0.8	
541	305	Eurotherm	379		3.3	16.7
675	463	Farnell Group	575	-7½	1.9	17.4
587½	291½	Filtronic†	526	-31½	0.4	36.4
32	7½	Forward Tech	8		3.9	
422	327½	GEC†	421	+8	4.0	19.4
148½	30½	Ind Control	47½	-½	1.3	
26	12	Intelek†	17	-2	7.2	
145½	81½	Kode	146½		0.6	
73	37½	LPA Ind	64½		4.4	23.8
30½	7½	Microvitec	8½	+½	13.3	
435	325	Mitel	425			
242	53	Network Techt	164½		0.9	19.1
458	255	Oxford Inst†	293½	-1½	3.3	10.3
237½	27½	Pace Micro†	[illegible]		6.3	
5436½	2339½	Philips Lmp m	4471½	+25	1.1	
238½	33½	Plasmon	57	-4	2.2	
313½	202½	Pressac	290		1.9	21.2
60½	29½	Prestwick	57½		2.4	16.0
512½	276	Psion	306	-6½	1.0	
301½	201	Racal Elect	283½	-1	2.6	54.5
132½	51½	Radamec	59½	+3	5.5	9.1
322	258	Renishaw	379½	+13½	3.0	22.0
3½	1½	Rodime	1½			
221½	149½	Roxboro	202		4.2	12.5
263½	165½	SDP Eur. Sys	262½	-1	1.1	31.4
411½	255	Senanson	357½		4.2	14.3
93½	36½	Sifamcies	29½		4.4	10.9
5926½	3671½	TDK	4568½	-31½	0.5	
108	55½	TGI	68		6.5	7.1
125½	91	TLG	125	-1	4.8	12.5
62	7	Tadpole Tech	31	+5½		
525	291	Telemetrix	43	-1	4.2	18.6
[illegible]	175	Telspec	202½			
177½	132	Thermo? Ftr	137½		4.1	8.5
[illegible]	[illegible]	Total Systems	137½	+1	1.3	28.4
[illegible]	[illegible]	Turnstall	117	-2	5.5	
31	26	[illegible]	27½	-1	0.2	
190½	[illegible]	[illegible]	159		6.7	8.6
37	17	[illegible] Technology	35		7.4	
552½	455	[illegible]	471		5.7	12.9

ENGINEERING

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
592½	257½	AAH†	270		5.5	12.7
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	35½	-½		
273	[illegible]	[illegible]	157½		5.7	7.2
166½	[illegible]	[illegible]	140½		3.1	17.9
[illegible]	137	[illegible]	163½		5.7	9.2
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	70		9.3	3.9
450	312	BBA	439	-2	2.4	21.4
259	150	BTR	190	-3	5.2	10.7
125½	9?	[illegible]	87½		5.1	9.1
102	54½	Babcock	72		2.0	
[illegible]	6½	Bailey (CH)	[illegible]		4.2	
132½	73	Barnes (Charles)	83	-3	4.5	9.7
44½	13	Beauford	15		6.7	7.0
63½	33	Benson Group	35		5.4	23.1
235	124	Bodycote	304	-3	3.4	11.7
97½	61	Bomed Co Un Ln	85½		5.7	
1045½	617½	Bodycote	1045½		1.0	30.9
69½	27½	Booth Ind	42½			
28½	17½	Bridport	18½		6.2	8.3
135½	37½	Brockhouse?	122½		4.6	15.9
1955	1183½	Br Aerospace	1932	-54	1.3	13.5
195	128	Br Steel	153	-3	8.2	14.0
156	101½	Brooke Tool	145½		4.3	
22½	12	Bullough	13		4.3	6.0
102½	72	Bullough	98		7.6	9.9
36	23	Carbo	33½		4.5	
232½	174½	Chem? Eng	193½	-2½	7.3	11.0
297½	181½	Chamberlin & Hill	215½		3.6	12.4
195	130	Chamberlin Hill	195	-5	5.2	8.9
865	570	Charter	630½	-1	5.6	3.3
265	76	Chemring	127½	-6	2.9	
380	235	Clyde Blowers	256½		3.3	56.6
390	251	Cobham	888½		1.7	14.9
485	296	Cohen (A)	400			
195	102	Concentric	112½		8.1	23.3
232	145½	David Brown	212½		5.1	12.0
396	237	EIC	292½	-1	5.5	10.0
24	[illegible]	Eliot	26½			
107½	57½	Elliott (B)	106½			
159½	96	Ensigmd?	131½		3.7	14.1
213	145	FKI	132		3.4	14.8
207½	145½	Fenner	172½		3.5	17.5
[illegible]	[illegible]	Firstgen?	170½	-½	3.0	13.9
62	75	Firth Rixon	39½	-½	0.8	27.1
133	86	Firth Rixson†	133		2.6	16.3
140	95½	Fitas?	40	-½	3.7	3.5
120½	50	GEI Intl	95	+½	5.7	10.1
161½	129½	Gellen Eng?	156½		6.5	5.6
335	132½	Glynwed	234	-3	6.3	10.7
136½	97½	Hadden Macllin	108½	-½	3.4	12.3
345	165	Hadleigh	196	-2½	4.6	3.0
101	156	Hall Eng	178½		5.5	7.5
149½	99	Hama	113½	-1½	3.7	15.4
75½	64½	Hampson Ind	68	-1½	4.6	13.9
46½	24	Hay Norman	30½			47.2
54½	27½	Headway†	44½		4.5	6.0
37½	42½	Hill & Smith	42½	+1	12.1	11.0
102½	37½	Hick Ge?	96½		2.8	15.2
230	159½	Hunting	229	-½	2.9	15.2
45½	273	IMI	443½		3.4	16.3
514	380	Johnson Matt	551½	+5½	2.9	13.4
43½	34½	Jones Stroud	27½		6.8	11.3
475	285	Kelsey Ind	475		8.4	7.1
385	202½	Lintel	375	+1½	3.6	11.7
36	24½	Lincat (T)	22½		4.3	10.5
37½	16½	Lon Intl	33			
592½	407½	Mang Bronze	412½	-6	2.3	11.3
504	361½	McKechnie	433	-1	4.4	13.0
176½	101½	Meggitt	175½	-5	3.1	23.6
105	30½	Molins	82½		5.6	12.7
18	10½	Metaltech	10½			
152	119½	Mettoy?	147½		9.6	8.6
970	267½	Molins	305	-7½	9.0	12.5
539½	397½	Morgan Crble	463		4.5	15.3
400½	332½	Morris Ashby	332½		3.0	13.4
55½	29	Nageand	54		4.6	11.7
62½	27½	Pilkadon?	53½		9.2	7.2
263½	182	Powerscreen	219½		6.0	5.7
255½	154	Quadrant	173½		7.2	8.9
326½	45	Quadrant Grp	50			
80	50	Radamec Metal	60			
62½	37½	Ransomes	59½		1.1	24.8
273½	225½	Renold	242		3.4	3.9
90½	62½	Richardson West	74		1.3	6.8
271½	192	Rolls-Royce	267½	+3½	2.8	19.9
317½	227½	Rotork	282		3.7	20.0
193½	90	Rubicon†	180	-3	4.3	12.9
1946½	1165½	SKF 'B'	1175	+3½	3.4	
174½	107½	Senior Eng	173		2.6	21.0
518½	313½	Serck-Rie	516		1.8	22.9
1344	897	Siebe	1295	+27	1.2	23.0
227½	105½	Six Hundred	120		5.2	8.5
993½	702	Smiths Ind	901	-15	2.5	21.2
28½	13	Solvesa	15	-½	2.0	
767	542½	Spirax-Sarco	570		3.1	14.8
318½	236½	Sterling Ind	317½		4.1	11.6
686½	424	TI	649	+2½	3.1	17.5
120½	88½	Tinsley (E)	102½		7.6	9.5
120½	64½	Transtec	68½		4.5	9.4
277½	144½	Tupler Lloyd	277½		3.2	18.8
417	251½	Ultra Elect	366½	+7½	2.5	
77½	48½	Utd Inds	63½		4.9	16.3
273½	169½	Vickers	201	-2	4.6	12.3
10½	6½	Villiers Grp	10	-½		
712½	505	Vosc	584	-13½	2.7	11.1
952	740	Vosper Thorny	770	+1	4.3	11.9
350	213½	Wagon Ind	310		3.8	13.8
304½	203½	Weir	290½	+2	3.5	14.1
259½	137½	Wellington Hdg	138½		7.3	8.0
49	23	Wellman	49		3.6	13.8
71½	45½	Wescol	60		3.6	17.2
825	525	Whatman	776	+1	2.5	
65½	30½	Widney†	45½		9.6	14.2

ENGINEERING, VEHICLES

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
154	97	Adwest†	126		6.2	9.8
197	152	Airflow Stream	156	-1	6.5	11.2
757	565	Avon Rubber	666		3.5	14.7
344	227½	Bestrom	327½		2.7	16.4
140	96	Britax	136	+1½	3.2	17.7
339½	238½	Denns	294½		3.9	13.6
348½	219½	First Tech	335½		1.5	23.5
1649	907	GKN	1545	+27	2.0	
4412½	3237½	General Mtr	4409½	-3½	2.8	
583½	357	Healys	437½		4.5	10.2
2326½	1540½	Honda Motor	2105½	+17½	0.4	
502	312½	Laird	442	-1	3.2	12.1
245	180	LucasVarity	239	+3	2.1	15.2
206	131	Mayflower	205½		1.7	19.9
172½	95½	Syltone	98½		8.2	8.2
257½	133	T & N	257	+2½	4.5	14.9
85½	18	Toad	27½			

FOOD MANUFACTURERS

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
660	418	All Food	625	-1	2.0	20.0
311½	215	Acatos & Hutch†	233½	+3½	5.6	24.6
48½	24½	Albert Fisher	28		15.0	7.3
320	240	Banks (S C)†	255		5.6	9.3
496	332	Barr (AG)	485		2.8	12.6
44½	30	Bersons Crisp†	39½	-1	5.0	8.5
402	209	Booker	232½	+7	12.9	
701	415	Brake Bros	688½		1.9	23.6
220	83	CPL Aromas	98	+10	6.1	38.5
796	464	Cadbury-Schw	784	-1	2.3	20.8
335	215	Carrs Milling	231		6.2	7.9
114½	57½	Cavaghan	114½		4.0	20.2
267½	203½	Cranswick	245		5.3	11.7
312½	195½	Dairy Crest Group	309		4.1	13.0
363½	217½	Dalgety	336	+10	3.6	
52½	30½	Daniels SW	48½	-1	0.8	27.0
464½	263½	Devro	439½	-3	2.5	19.7
130½	79½	Finlay (James)	125	-3½	3.6	12.9
455½	290	Geest	428½		2.5	20.0
26	8½	Global	9½		9.6	5.0
360	270	Greencore	313		2.8	17.2
195½	98½	Hazlewood Fds	183½		4.8	13.2
200½	142	Hillsdown	169		7.4	10.1
77½	35½	JLI Group	62½		9.9	13.0
420	345	Linton Park	401		5.0	8.8
142	87	Matthews (B)	94	+1	5.6	9.0
235½	177½	Nichols (V)	211½		4.3	11.9
308	188½	Nthn Foods†	290	+6	4.2	16.6
22½	13	Nthrbra Fo	16½	-½	1.5	6.4
112½	77½	Paramount Foods	111½		6.0	
105	47½	Rascoe's	57			82.4
147½	106½	Perkins Food	133	-1½	3.5	
122½	47½	Plant & Gen	74		2.7	
167½	60	Sentry Farm	67½		9.4	6.2
44½	25½	Sims Food	28			3.0
567	398½	Tate & Lyle	515½	-2	3.6	13.9
191½	112½	Tresil	143½	-2	5.4	15.4
651½	414	Unigate	637½	+2	4.1	15.4
573	337½	Unilever	570	+14	1.9	25.0
4043½	2487½	Unilever (NV)	4043½	+100	1.6	
280	187	Utd Biscuits	273	+1½	4.6	21.2
57	29½	WT Foods	56		3.3	21.5

HEALTHCARE

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
400½	243½	Alnca UniChem	382½		3.0	29.5
155	116½	Assoc Nursg	153½		3.1	24.2
870	472½	Bespak	868½		1.8	24.9
1432½	115	Biocompts Intl	172½	+1½		
159½	96	Care UK	159½		1.0	18.5
114½	47½	Celsis	48½	-½		
469½	359½	Consolidy H	469½	+1	3.2	17.0
31	24½	CrestaCare	27½		4.7	
28½	4½	Enviromed	8			
167½	106½	Ferraris Group	144½		2.8	13.5
169½	142½	Gyrus	168	-½		
215	129	Hanfigh Tec	147½	-1½	2.5	18.6
390	81½	Innovative Tech	105½			
92	60	Isercare Gp	85		5.3	13.5
580	330	Isotron	537½	-22½	1.5	19.1
182	143	Lon Intl	173½	-1	2.0	23.3
217½	122½	Nestor Hlth	214	-1	2.1	28.0
2750	1100	Nycomed Amsh	2255	+10	0.9	50.7
20	3½	Premier Health	5½			
315½	234½	Scholl	231	-1½	3.4	18.3
557½	382½	Seton Health	557½		2.0	21.8
919	123	Shield Diag	675	+80		
270	180	Sinclair Mod	223	-1		48.5
1977½	150	Smith & Neph	178	+2	3.6	16.1
3½	2	Tamaris	2½		4.6	15.5
412½	226½	West Hthcare†	376½	-2½	2.3	17.1

HOUSEHOLD GDS & TEXT

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
282½	148½	Airsprung	148½		5.4	9.5
250	167	Alba	169		4.6	9.5
85	37	Allsopl	65		6.3	6.8
140½	77½	Alexandra W	140		[illegible]	[illegible]
205½	119½	Allied Textile†	180½	-½	5.9	11.3
32½	14½	Amtoul	15		6.2	[illegible]
182½	102½	BLP Group	178		4.4	6.1
233½	163½	Baird (Wm)	231½	+10	5.2	18.1
76½	41½	Biston Birsca	57½	+½	3.7	26.1
146½	57½	Black Arrow	135½		4.0	11.2
421½	324½	Black (Peter)	414		1.9	[illegible]
120½	77½	British Mohair	79½		6.9	25.9
180	59½	Claremont Garments	52½	-2½	14.5	
142½	81½	Coats Viyella	95	-½	11.3	[illegible]
204½	146	Cornwell Prnt Sp	174½	-½	2.1	[illegible]
374	229	Courtaulds Textile	332½		5.5	8.2
42½	13	Creighton	30½			
17	5½	Dalynn	9			[illegible]
75	48	Dawson	55	-4	9.6	
206½	112	Dentry Group	132½		[illegible]	[illegible]
257½	166	Dewhirst	231½		[illegible]	[illegible]
314	207½	Grose Heel?	[illegible]		[illegible]	[illegible]
49	19	Drummond Group	24		[illegible]	[illegible]
145½	107½	Eclipse Blinds	109		[illegible]	[illegible]
36	26	Elbeo	32		[illegible]	[illegible]
121½	74	FR Group	118		[illegible]	[illegible]
35	24	Faupel Trading	31	-½	[illegible]	[illegible]
11½	7½	Foster (J)	8			
70½	36½	French	41½	-1	11.5	[illegible]
502½	140	Gaskell	162½		[illegible]	[illegible]
125	67½	Haggas (J)	70½		[illegible]	[illegible]
13½	5½	Hartstone Group	11		[illegible]	[illegible]
359½	226½	Hicking Pentecost	257½		[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	1½	Hollas Group	3½			
32½	10½	Homecraft Group	15½			
102	52½	Horace Small	[illegible]			
320	250	IMP Intl	315		[illegible]	[illegible]
55	13½	Jacques Vert	13½			
67½	31½	Jerome (S) & Sons	44½		[illegible]	[illegible]
380	230	Jones Stroud	235		[illegible]	[illegible]
71½	27½	Jourdan (T)	52½			
193½	97	Kenwood App	117½			
245	118	Lambert Howarth	235		4.3	[illegible]
195	115	Lamont Hldgs	146		11.0	[illegible]
172	115	Leeds Group	110½	-1	[illegible]	7.0
38	8½	Lesbe Wise	[illegible]		30.8	10.3
150	77	Lowland?	159½	-1	[illegible]	[illegible]
65	47	Lyles (S)	61		[illegible]	[illegible]
194½	114½	McBride	186½		[illegible]	[illegible]
202½	85½	Merchant?	94½		9.5	[illegible]
575	545	Osborne & Little	560		[illegible]	[illegible]
8½	5½	PEX Group	[illegible]			1.0
207½	102½	Parkland Group	198½		[illegible]	[illegible]
523	433½	Pelorson Zoc	[illegible]		[illegible]	[illegible]
470	370	Paterson Zoch A	415		3.6	11.0
129	88	Pentland Group	123		[illegible]	[illegible]
258	185	Pifco	185		[illegible]	[illegible]
256	135	Pifco A Vtg	197		[illegible]	[illegible]
193	50½	Pittards	53½		[illegible]	[illegible]
47½	35	Readicut Int	39½		8.2	11.6
1150	695	Reckitt Colm	1060	-19	2.4	16.5
89½	33½	Richards	50½		2.8	19.8
45½	19½	Richards	45½			
297½	182½	Royal Doulton	182½		6.5	10.5
40½	23	SEET	31			
48½	35½	Sherwood Group	35½		[illegible]	[illegible]
144½	97½	Shiloh	135½		[illegible]	[illegible]
372½	265	Silentnight	275		[illegible]	[illegible]
79½	50½	Sirdar	61		[illegible]	9.4
43½	31½	Sommer Group	33		7.6	9.5
23½	8½	Stoddard	13		9.4	27.5
330	212	Stoves	232½		[illegible]	[illegible]
272½	196½	Swallowfield	237½		[illegible]	[illegible]
219	152	Tomkinsons	194		[illegible]	[illegible]
18½	5½	UK Safety	9½			
195	130	Usher (F)	130		[illegible]	[illegible]
102	70	Victoria	75		[illegible]	[illegible]
132½	115½	Vymura	141		4.4	[illegible]
98½	40	Walker Greenbk	47½	-1½	12.6	[illegible]
98½	67½	Wilmot-Breeden	75½		[illegible]	[illegible]
100½	60	Wyevale	60½		10.5	[illegible]
235	195	Yates? (Arthur)	195		[illegible]	[illegible]
205	97	Yorkyde	95		[illegible]	11.7

INSURANCE

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
3637½	2246½	Aeg Gen	3037½	-53½	[illegible]	
127	96	Angerlaun	125½		[illegible]	[illegible]
89½	54½	Bakestock?	55		[illegible]	[illegible]
1245½	710	Britannic	1214	-2½	[illegible]	[illegible]
140	112	CLM Insce	140	-1	[illegible]	[illegible]
275½	190½	Charles Taylor	269½		[illegible]	[illegible]
1170	629½	Comm Union	1085	+10	[illegible]	[illegible]
338½	138	Cox Insce	137	-1	[illegible]	[illegible]
535	378	Dom & Gen	535	+2	[illegible]	[illegible]
413½	211	FBD IE	413½	-15½	[illegible]	[illegible]
152½	113	Finsbury Undr	148		[illegible]	[illegible]
1540	775	Gen Accident	1527	+12	3.5	[illegible]
465	257	GRE	420	-1	3.3	[illegible]
559	271½	Hiberman IE	559½	-6½	[illegible]	[illegible]
235	115	Hiscox	179½		[illegible]	[illegible]
165	111	Hiscox Select	152		[illegible]	[illegible]
1565	593½	Independent	1252½		[illegible]	[illegible]
475½	267	Inst Life	443		[illegible]	[illegible]
236	150½	Jarvis Lyd?	153½		[illegible]	[illegible]
113	98	Kiln Capital	109½		[illegible]	[illegible]
137	100½	Lambert Fen	100½		[illegible]	[illegible]
775	382	Legal & Gen	665	-25	[illegible]	[illegible]
1978½	1267½	Liberty Life	1746½	-2½	[illegible]	[illegible]
211	127½	Lmd?	176½		[illegible]	[illegible]
577	391	Londn & Man	550½		[illegible]	[illegible]
5240½	3066½	Mnch Mnh	5162½	-17½	[illegible]	[illegible]
125	95	Mavficon?	102½			
111	81	New London Cap	82		9.1	12.1
553	300	Norwich Union	498	-3	2.7	25.9
129½	59½	Oldham	128½		4.5	
138½	76½	Orchi	87½		8.2	51.7
135	93	Premium Inst	135	+1	3.7	31.5
948	483	Prudential	898½	+28½	2.2	30.9
20½	15½	PWS†	20		4.7	4.4
800	429½	Royal & Sun All	757½	+16½	3.1	18.8
202½	95½	St James Place	197½		0.9	29.5
171	114½	Sedgwick†	155½		4.5	12.3
23½	21½	Stel Bonolt	24½		7.7	
608½	263½	Sun Life & P	580	+1	2.3	33.2
128	103	Syndicate Cap	114	+2½	9.9	11.1
620	423	Utd Assurance	600	+5	4.1	21.2
159½	105½	Wellington	153½		3.7	10.5
164½	115½	Willis Corroon†	147	+1	5.6	11.9
25	9½	Windsor†	15½		4.8	

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
593	400	3i	575		2.1	33.5
120½	86½	Aberdeen High Inc	117½	+1	7.1	17.5
233½	84	Aberdn New Dawn	123	+3½	1.7	48.9
253	206½	Aberforth Smirt	222		4.0	24.8
153	107	Aberforth Spo Wts	124½	+½		
89½	51½	Acsuct Emerg	62½	+1½		
2836½	2112½	Alliance	2830½	+35½	2.5	47.3
674	471½	Anglo & O'seas	668½	+6	2.0	
89½	64½	Asof Opps	74½		0.4	
99	51½	Baillie Gifford SN	62½	+1		
277	205	Bankers	272	+3½	2.4	44.3
125	68	Barng Em Eu	104½			
564	383	Barng Tribect	538½		1.9	
131	98½	Br Assets†	128½	+1½	4.7	24.9
120½	99½	Br Empire Sec	117½	+3	1.1	63.5
90½	52½	Brazilian	55½	+½		
363	352	Brunner†	349½	-½	2.3	54.9
126	103	BZW Conv	110		8.9	
100½	74½	Calmgeron Dean	83	-1½		
987½	509½	Candover	977½	-2½	2.0	55.3
79	54½	Central Euro Gwth	66½			
188	152	City Merch HY	186	+½	6.3	
264	175½	City Of Lon	261	+1	3.1	36.7
293½	207½	Corol Asset	288½	+2½	0.9	
79½	67	Darae Inv Inc	75	+½	13.8	9.6
595	390	Derby Cap	583½	-2½		
177½	127½	Derby Inc	129½			4.0
200	142½	Dunedin Inc G	196	+1	3.7	30.4
377½	315½	Dunedin Smlr	372	+1½	3.4	31.6
255½	151	Dunedn Wrde	204	+2	1.3	
292½	86½	EAC	257½	+1	0.2	
94	43	Edin Dragon	55½	+1		
34	24	Edinburgh Inca	29			
487	343½	Edinburgh IT	481½	+7½	2.8	38.3
134	79½	Edin Japan	96½	+3		
488	312	Edin US Inv	479½	+8	1.0	
999½	420½	Electra Inv	596	-½	2.0	42.0
179½	143	Eng & Scott	175	+1½	2.3	
34½	15½	Enl Cap	27			
429½	307½	European Asset	427½	+3	1.1	
113½	47½	Fidelity Asian Val	66½	+1		
313½	216½	Fidelty Euro Val	310	+3	0.2	
50	24	Fidelty Jap Val	31½	+½		
148½	119½	Fidelty Spec Val	148½	+1½	1.1	74.0
235½	205½	Finsbury A	235½		2.1	64.2
206	145½	Finsbury Gwth	202		2.2	56.6
214	130	Fins Ar Chile	141	+1	1.7	72.2
31½	2½	Fins Ar Wts	3½			
613½	375½	Fleming Amert	599½	+9½	0.5	
82½	44½	Fleming Asian	60½	+½		
19½	6½	Fleming Asian Wts	10½			
106½	64½	Fleming Chinese	80½	+½		
40	13½	Fleming Ch Wts	23½	+1		
457	260½	Fleming Claver	453½	+½	1.9	
556	381	Fleming Cont	556½	+5½	0.9	
158	100½	Fleming Em Mkts	121½	+2	0.4	
307½	227½	Fleming Entp	306	+1	2.2	45.3
448	371½	Fleming Fledg	447	+5	0.3	
360	210	Flem Grd Gth Ord	358	+1	1.0	
160½	140½	Flem Grd Gth Prf	160		10.2	
117½	78	Fleming Inc Cap	117½	+1½	6.1	22.3
111½	103	Fleming Ing Inc	109		11.7	
314	117	Fleming Ing Cap	310½	+4½		
63	39½	Fleming Indonesia	43½	+½		
22	5	Fleming In Wts	10½			
214½	128½	Fleming Japan	159½	+4½		
407½	335½	Fleming Merc	405½	+3	2.8	36.9
114½	70½	Fleming Nat Res	80½	+½	0.3	
409	321½	Fleming Ovsas	401	+4	1.4	
163½	137½	Fleming Smllr Co	163½		3.4	47.5
191½	147½	Foreign & Col	191½	+3½	1.5	66.9
113½	90½	F&C Inc Gwth	112		4.0	31.1
130½	85	F&C Emg Mkts	100½	+2		
266½	123	F&C Enterprise	242	+½	2.0	
430½	296½	F&C Eurotst	427	+3	0.4	
179½	133½	F&C German	177	+1	0.4	
176	99½	F&C Pacific	122½	+2½	1.9	58.4
160½	131½	F&C PEP	160½		3.5	35.0
195½	166½	F&C Smaller	193½		1.8	56.6
[illegible]	[illegible]	F&C US Smlr	161½	+4½		
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	63½		10.1	12.1
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible] Cap	175			
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible] Dual Cp	205½			
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible] Cap	51			
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	21½	+½	55.3	2.1
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible] Zero	191½			
[illegible]	[illegible]	Gartmore Brit	307½		3.7	
[illegible]	[illegible]	Gartmore Euro	265½	+1½	0.6	
[illegible]	[illegible]	Gartmore Shrd	140	+½	8.5	14.2
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible] Sml Co	409	-½	1.8	60.4
[illegible]	[illegible]	Geared Inc Ord	63½	+1½	9.7	8.1
[illegible]	[illegible]	Geared Inc Inc	57½	+½	10.7	7.4
[illegible]	[illegible]	Gov Am Sm Cos	32½	+½	0.7	
[illegible]	[illegible]	Gov Eng Mkt	82½	+½	0.6	
[illegible]	[illegible]	Govett Am Smlr	176	+3		
[illegible]	[illegible]	Govett High Inc	33½	+3	7.5	15.4
[illegible]	[illegible]	Govett Oriental	102½	-2½	0.8	
[illegible]	[illegible]	Govett Strategic	418		2.3	39.5
[illegible]	5	Gresham House	22½		1.4	1.3
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible] Growth	125½	-½	3.0	46.6
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible] Japan	157	-9½	0.3	
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible] Ch Inc	141	+½	7.5	
[illegible]	[illegible]	Henderson Am Cp	29			
[illegible]	[illegible]	Henderson Am In	117	-½	8.3	15.3
[illegible]	15	Henderson Am Wt	27½	-½		
[illegible]	[illegible]	Hend Eur Gth	338	-1½	1.5	75.2
[illegible]	[illegible]	Hend Far East	117½	+1	7.2	16.8
[illegible]	[illegible]	Hend Smbert	567	-1	1.7	71.1
[illegible]	[illegible]	Hend High Inc	156½		5.4	
[illegible]	[illegible]	Hend Jap Smlr	28½	-1		
[illegible]	[illegible]	Hend Strat	252		2.0	60.7
[illegible]	[illegible]	Hend Strata	539½		0.1	
[illegible]	[illegible]	Hend TR Pac	63½	+1	0.5	70.6
[illegible]	[illegible]	Hend Tech	106½	+1½		
[illegible]	[illegible]	Herald	170½		0.6	
[illegible]	[illegible]	High Income T	118		7.5	14.2
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible] Smlr	150		2.5	53.2
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible] UK Smlr	159½		2.3	63.4
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible] Cap†	195	+1½	3.7	29.4
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible] Bzteh	14	-½		
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible] Wts	13			
[illegible]	65	[illegible] C	77½	+½		
[illegible]	38	INVESCO Asia	56½	-1	1.5	67.8
[illegible]	47	INVESCO Eng	92	+1½	11.4	10.9
[illegible]	166	INVESCO Eng Inc	167½	-½	0.9	72.1
[illegible]	[illegible]	INVESCO Jap Dis	29	-½		
[illegible]	[illegible]	INVESCO Kaua?	43	-½		
463½	323	IR Tech Inv	402½	+1½	11.8	32.2
353½	206½	Turkey Trust	293		1.5	61.7
163½	137½	Undervalued Ast	152	+½	1.9	62.3
164	137	Value Inc Tst	154	+½	3.8	32.0
120½	75	Value Real	119½	+1½	0.9	59.9
46½	30½	Warrants & Val	45½	-½		
101½	77½	Wigmore	98½		1.0	
363	263	Witan†	359½	+5½	2.4	44.4
83½	66½	Ycomm Inct	67½	-½	4.1	
47	25	INVESCO Tokyo	29	+1½		
185½	83½	JF Fledg Jap	100	+2½		
154	62½	J Fry Euro U	150		4.5	32.7
88½	42	J Fry Util	87		7.7	20.2
86	68½	J Fry Util Inc	81		8.2	
133	92½	Jupiter Ex Inct	132½		7.4	18.7
27½	3½	Jupiter Ex IncWt	25½			
100	76½	Jupiter Grd Capt	99		10.1	12.2
47	31	Jupiter Grd Pkg	45½			
147½	120½	Jupiter Intl Gth	142½		3.4	
432	293	Kiwer Chrt	428½	+2	1.6	79.9
118½	73½	Kiwer E Mkt	94	+2½		
174	153½	Kiwer End	165	-1		
148	74	Kiwer H Inc	147		10.2	14.4
381	261	Kiwer O'seas†	381	+5	1.3	73.5
196½	161½	Kiwer Smlr	196		2.3	52.4
387	99	Korea—Euro	166½	+½	0.7	75.7
173½	98½	Latin American	121½	+½		
1208½	902½	Law Debenture	1190	+5	2.8	36.1
122	103½	Lds Dil Opp	114½	-½		
135½	109½	Lloyds Sm Cap	132½	+½		
25½	16½	Lloyds Sm Div	20½	+½	30.3	
158½	126	Lloyds Sm Pkg	150		3.7	
201½	159½	Lon St Lawrence	200		4.0	31.0
371½	292½	Lowland	371	+5	3.9	31.8
812½	635	M&G 2nd Dual Cp#	800			
65	50	M&G 2nd Dual Inc#	50			1.6
92	56	M&G Inc Geared	91½	-½	7.9	18.4
66½	31½	M&G Inc Inv Tst Cp	65½	-½		
32½	20½	M&G Inc Inv Tst Inc	25½		28.5	4.1
172½	128	M&G Inc Package	172		4.2	30.8
80½	71½	M&G Inc Zero Div	80			
47	19½	M&G Rec Cap	46½	-½		
72½	40½	M&G Rec Geared	71½	-½	9.4	13.7
31	17½	M&G Rec Inc	26	-½	26.0	5.0
181½	142	M&G Rec Packg	180½		3.7	34.7
111½	98½	M&G Rec Zero Div	111½			
197	142½	M Currie Euro	196	+2	0.5	
106	61½	M Curie Japan	77	+1½		
165½	86½	M Curie Pac	116½	+½	1.0	79.6
334	242	Majedie	333	+½	2.6	50.6
409½	273	Merchants	395	+3	4.4	28.9
144½	107½	Mercury Euro Pv	144½	+2	1.9	41.7
60½	30	Mercury Eur Wt	60½	+1		
99½	57½	Mercury World†	65½	+1½	1.5	
14	0½	Mercury Wld Wts	0½	-½		
769½	603	Monks Inv Tst	762½	+6	1.6	61.8
200½	158½	Morg Gren Inc	192		4.4	26.9
92	59½	Morg Wts	90½			
100½	68½	Morg Latn Amer	77		0.5	
49½	20½	Morg Wts	30½			
130½	110½	Murray Ent	120		3.2	41.1
21½	10	Murray Ent Wts	17	+½		
88	53½	Murray Emg Eco	64½	+1	1.1	79.2
21½	6½	Murray Em Ec Wt	8½			
502½	364	Murray Income	488	+1½	3.7	35.3
501	401½	Murray Intl	468	+4½	3.8	
308½	192½	Murray S/C DP	208½			
355	163½	Murray S/C Cap	347½	+4		
73½	57½	Murray S/C Inct	59½		25.5	4.7
4900	3150	Murray S/C Unt	4875		3.1	
502	339½	Murray Small	396½	+1½	1.9	51.1
415	386	Murray Vent	400½		4.7	24.2
286	234	Natwest Ent	272½	-5	2.3	41.8
5½	2½	Newmarket	2½			
490	353½	O'seas Inv Tst	489½	+4½	1.0	
288	156½	O'seas Wts	287	+2		
126	34½	Pacific Assets	50½	+2½	1.0	
101	65½	Perpetual Euro	100½	+2	0.6	
146½	98	Perp Inc Gth	146½	+3½	3.3	43.8
56	28	Perpetual Jap	33	+1		
366½	292½	Perp UK Sm Co	352½		3.4	31.5
£191	£128½	Personal Assets	£191	+50	1.5	
142½	113½	Prolific Inc	136½	-½	3.8	29.3
308	228	RIT Cap Ptn	307	+4	0.7	
569½	475½	Rebeco	534	+1	2.0	
577½	497	Rolinco	541½	+4	0.8	
109½	37½	Schrod Asia Pac	55½	+1½	1.1	
96½	56½	Schrod Emg Cal	68	+1½		
150½	177½	Schrod Inc Gwth	147½	+½	3.9	28.3
75½	46½	Schrod Jap Gwth	58	+1		
512½	133½	Schrod Korea	282½	+1		
85½	19½	Schrod Split Cap	84½			
127½	102½	Schrod Split Inct	115		9.5	
160	142½	Schrod Split Zero	159½			
160½	126½	Schrod Uk Gwth	158	+1½	2.7	42.7
201½	146½	Schrod Vent Intl	177	+1	1.3	
366	273½	Scot Amer	363½	+2	2.2	57.8
214	169½	Scot Americant	214	+3	3.1	37.3
311½	91½	Scot Asian	136	+3		
128½	98½	Scot Eastern	127½	+2		
370½	275½	Scot Mtge	368½	+4	1.8	54.0
104	93	Scot Nat Tst	101½		10.3	10.7
130	111½	Scot Value	126½	+1	2.0	26.5
2490	1960	Second Alliance†	2487½	+37½	2.7	46.6
127½	95½	Secs Tst of Scot	127½	+½	3.8	34.4
167	133½	Shires Smlr	166½		4.7	25.9
158½	121½	Smaller Cos	156½	+½	2.6	47.0
385	344½	St Andrew Inv	368½		3.5	
555½	377½	Temple Bar	547½	+5½	4.5	27.2
89½	72½	Templeton	89	+½	3.3	39.3
169½	102½	Tpton Emg Mkt	120	+1½	1.1	70.1
191	133	TR Euro Growth	187½	+2½	0.6	
47½	34½	TR Property	47½	+½	2.8	33.2

LEISURE & HOTELS

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
91½	11	ABI Lss	15			13.6
480	265½	Airtours	480	+12	1.7	24.1
59½	28½	Alld Lss	37		4.8	8.4
67½	37½	Arcadian	60½		2.5	25.2
22½	9½	Arena Lss	18½			
167½	122½	BS Group	132½		6.1	
132½	95	Baldwin	120		4.2	16.8
200½	72	Bluebird Toys	103		11.0	
1075	673	Bassey Hulls?	675		1.6	25.3
41½	24½	Burndon	31½		8.1	8.1
219½	127½	Capital Corpn	138½		7.3	15.7
240	93½	Character Grp	224½	-½	2.5	14.9
104½	48½	Glenedan?	65½		3.7	14.6
100½	70½	Clubhaus	84			22.9
386	180	Eurocamp†	278½		5.6	11.7
126	67	Euro Disney	90			
198½	120½	Euro Leisure	129½		4.3	7.8
154	72½	First Choice†	143½		2.4	49.9
376½	235	First Leisure	330½	+4½	3.5	18.5
171½	110½	Friendly Hotels	124	+½	5.7	18.4
1000	668	Granada	953	+3	1.9	19.7
50	29½	Hi-Tec Sports†	38		6.6	7.3
289½	160½	Holmes Place	265½		1.6	32.6
244½	163½	Hornby	187½		4.3	9.7
408½	255	Hozelock	360	-2½	3.9	19.1
185½	139½	Jarvis Hotels	170	+1	3.3	10.9
512½	272	Jurys Hotel	509	-3½	1.6	24.4
30½	21	Kunick	30½		3.1	15.6
338	217½	Ladbroke	312	-4	3.9	22.4
413	261½	London Clubs	293½	-½	3.6	30.8
231	167½	Macdonald Htls	219½	+1	2.7	18.2
180½	138½	Man Utd	151	+1	1.3	20.2
97	30½	Mandarin Orntl	49½	+½	7.9	8.1
516	333	Millennium & Cop	514½	-1½	2.1	19.6
1½	1	Millwall Hldgs	1			
144½	85½	Newcastle Utd	88½	-5	2.3	12.6
500	189½	Northern	477		2.0	37.2
188½	61½	Prism Leisure†	70½		12.1	4.8
38	15½	Queensborough	23		2.2	9.9
20½	10½	Queens Moat	19½	+½		5.5
458½	278	Rank Grp†	331	-4½	6.8	12.5
65	36	Regal Hotel	44	-½	3.1	11.7
75½	40½	Ryan Hotels IE	64½		3.4	13.5
1600	1157½	Savoy Hotel 'A'	1425		1.5	
111½	32½	Sheffield United	35½	+1½		
267½	184½	Sinclair (Wm)†	242½		4.7	11.7
153½	47	Southampton	69½		1.8	
112	91	Stakis	112	+2½	2.8	18.8
320	235½	Stanley Leisure	293	+1½	2.1	17.9
11	4	Tandem	5½			63.3
346	346	Tanyard†	346		0.9	36.0
210	120½	Thistle Hotels	198½		2.8	15.4
142	59½	Tottenham Hot	67		1.9	9.1
177½	94	Vardon	187		1.8	20.0
411	265½	Wembley	350½		1.1	
158½	89½	Zetters Gp	120½		10.9	7.0

MEDIA

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
386½	303½	Abbott Mead	386½	+12½	2.2	26.3
169½	102½	Adscene	152½	-1	7.1	15.8
79½	59½	Anglo Gp	73½	+1½	0.9	20.6
201	75	Aspen Gp	76½	+½	10.2	
170½	120	Atlantic Telecom	167½	+2½		
80½	42½	BBB Design	58½			
330	185	Barbour Index	221½	-1½	5.8	25.0
7	1½	Bidwell	1½			
385	315	Black (A&C)	382½		4.6	18.3
409½	267½	Border TV	328½		2.7	25.1
528	405	Bristol	447½		4.5	15.3
191	95½	Britt Allcroft	187½	+13½	1.3	26.9
666½	213	BSkyB†	428½	+3½	1.8	25.8
188½	120½	CIA Gp	184½	+1	1.8	35.4
647½	447½	Capital Radio	633	-11	2.7	19.6
577½	408	Carlton Comm	437½	+½	3.6	12.4
812½	512½	Chrysalis†	730		0.5	
95½	69	City of Lon	80		8.6	10.4
112½	88	Cordiant Comms	103½		1.4	12.3
174	134½	Creative Pub	169½		5.5	56.5
2500	1431½	Daily Mail	2471½	-21½	1.2	28.9
2481½	1331½	Daily Mail 'A'	2450	-18½	1.2	28.6
216½	120½	Dialog	180			
430	195	Dorling Kind	228½	+9½	2.5	37.8
1106	715½	EMAP	1056½	-12	1.6	24.8
705	420	Elsevier?	548½	+9½	3.0	75.9
1122½	841½	Elsevier	1044½	+2	2.4	24.4
1840	1400	Euromoney Pb	1750		1.6	19.3
66	37	Fitch	63½		1.4	
603½	481	Flextech	550			
232½	117½	GGT Group	202½		4.0	30.7
232½	155½	GWR Gp	186½		1.9	35.3
392½	285½	Grashouse Group	370		2.4	14.1
45½	24½	Goodhead	38½		1.6	13.0
435	254	HIT Entmt	405	-10	0.2	74.6
287½	207½	Haynes Pub	270		5.3	11.1
14	6½	Highbury Hse	12½			
238	160	Hodder H'line	225		3.7	15.4
485	231	Home Counts	485		1.8	43.2
415½	295	IBC	387½		3.1	13.9
26½	18½	Incepta	21½			
407½	297½	Independent	377½		2.2	25.9
157½	95	Infoscreen?	156		3.8	11.5
229½	172½	Johnston Press	207½		1.6	19.1
45	25	Lopex	37		2.0	9.9
373½	272½	Maiden	372½	+7½	1.9	22.9
49½	23½	Mediakey	32	+½	5.5	
1265	940	Metal Bulletin	1035		2.8	
217½	129½	Midland Ind	210½		2.7	21.9
226½	170	Miror Gp	179	-2½	3.2	12.7
1028	551½	More Gp	1024		2.0	
386½	258½	News Corp	380½	+7½	0.3	18.3
340½	215½	News Corp Pref	335½	+7½	0.9	
277½	225	Newsquest	264½	+2	2.6	16.3
47½	4½	On Demand Inf#	6½			
37½	11½	Osprey Comms	12½			
955	655	Pearson	943	+24	2.5	65.5
83	29½	Photoboth?	42½			
897½	750	Portsmth Snod	887½	+2½	2.1	18.2
258½	51½	Quarto	68½		8.5	
730	506	Reed Intl	677	+13	2.6	24.6
769	509½	Reuters	643	+11	2.5	23.6
120½	100½	Saatchi	120½	+2½	1.2	32.6
710	542½	Scot Med	659		3.8	16.8
454	336	Scott Radio	448½		2.6	19.6
62½	38½	Standardr	51½	+1	4.0	
26	6½	Shoppy Kids	12		1.2	
535	390	Smithsons	535	+2½	2.0	18.4
30½	14½	Sterling Pub	21			4.7
101	42½	Taylor Nelson	100½		1.1	37.8
222½	173	Television Cp	212½		1.9	15.9
1844½	1168½	Thomson Corp	1825½	+23½	2.5	38.6
526½	416½	Trinity Intl	513½	-2	3.0	17.8
357	132½	Ulster TV	230		2.9	22.9
810	625	United News	721		4.2	
280½	84½	VCI	86½	+1	11.4	4.5
98½	50½	VTR	90½	-1	6.6	9.6
329	236	WPP	297½	-2½	0.7	18.9
142½	98½	Wilmington	142½		1.1	31.5

MINING

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
7000	2290½	Ang Am Coal	3625	-31½	6.5	5.9
3993½	1975	Ang Am	2398½	-21½	3.6	
4940½	2068½	Ang Am Gold	2358½	-106½	8.9	
1168½	643½	Anglo Am Plat	846½		3.2	22.4
32½	16½	Anglo Pac Grp	17½			
49½	24½	Arcon Intl	27			
952½	408½	Ashanti†	565	-4½	2.2	
107	49½	Aston	59½		9.5	
243½	65	Avocet	65	-10		
252½	133½	Billiton	166	+5	3.7	16.8
35½	26½	Bisichi	31½		3.2	35.4
33½	16½	Bougainville	18½			
527½	216	Central Pacific	276	-½		
103½	21½	Cons Murchison	30½	-3		0.9
2418½	1062½	De Beers	1209½		4.9	12.1
713	342½	Driefontein	380	+1½	3.4	11.8
549½	71	Durban	137½	+4½		
116½	52	E Rand Gold	65	+½	26.5	2.7
31½	11	E Rand Prop	11½			
323½	117½	Elandsrand	152½	+½	11.6	
292½	181	Eng China Cl	262½	+8½	6.0	20.1
489½	92	Elandsr?	99½	-3½	16.1	
351½	92	FS Cons	285½	-2	14.5	8.9
69½	17	FS Dev	27			
1790½	753½	GFSA†	800	-½	3.5	15.8
179	65	Gencor	103½	+½	3.9	6.4
197	98½	Gold Fields Prop	135	+12	5.9	11.3
27	12	Greenwich R 'A'	20½			
140½	28½	Grootvlei Cons	54½	-½	1.5	9.5
548½	112½	Harmony	192½	+½		6.0
888½	443½	Impala Plat	587½	-6½	1.7	20.0
39	9½	Kenmare Res	12½	-½		
78½	18	Kloof	16½	+½		
29	8½	Kleofontein?	10½	-½		
94	29	MIM	32	+1½	3.2	
1503½	900	Minorco	1018½	+6½	3.8	9.3
162	65	Montagne	98		5.2	
88½	50½	Normandy	56	-½	4.2	11.8
237½	149½	North	160½	+½	3.3	21.5
385	22½	Petaling Tin	44½	-2½	1.0	
265½	64½	RGC	65½	+1½	6.2	3.3
455	100	RUS	103½		26.6	1.3
55	24½	Rucksfood	27		15.3	6.3
300½	76	Rundfontein	110½	-7½	5.5	25.8
139½	62	Reunion Mng	102½	+1		
1129	641	Rio Tinto	830½	+1½	3.9	15.2
1064	653½	Rio Tinto Ltd	793½	+15½	3.5	18.5
44½	4½	St Barbara	5			
397½	145½	St Helena†	147½	+1½	22.4	2.0
348½	128½	Sons Gwalia	182½	-1½	5.8	12.8
228½	97½	Sthern Pacific	114	+1½		
1856½	734½	Southvaal	925	-9½	11.2	9.0
4793½	1581½	Vaal Reefs	2343½	-84½	9.3	
418	177	WMC	304½	+3½	2.4	24.5
37½	15	Wankie Col 2	18		6.3	6.1
67½	27½	Water Hall	56½			
460	405	Watts Blake	422½		4.8	14.3
2162½	891½	Western Deep	1100	-9½	7.3	7.2
205	66½	Zambia Copper	141	-½		

OIL & GAS

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
181½	173½	Abbot Group	179	-½	7.5	28.7
85½	20½	Alliance Res	25	-1½		
98½	51	Aromex	61			
111	60½	Ass Oil & Gas	77	+1½		
42½	12½	Assoc Pet	31½			
522½	257½	Br Borneo	355	-1½	1.0	45.9
139½	134	BG	307½	+½	3.9	28.2
965	662	Br Petroleum	855½	-3½	3.2	19.0
2½	1	Bula Resources	1½			
1139	835	Burmah Castrl	1085	-15	5.3	15.2
639	398½	Clara Energy	404½	-10		
117	55	Centrica	111	-1½		
24½	10½	Copley Res	12½	-½		
26½	14½	Dana Pet	18½	-½		
101½	31½	Dragon Oil	65½	+4½		
38½	22½	Edin Oil & Gs	23½		1.5	15.2
10	3½	Emerald Energy	7½	-½		
734½	510	Enterprise	570	-9	3.9	29.2
16½	9½	Fortune	12½			46.1
373½	241½	Hardy Oil	284	-3	0.6	61.5
105½	79	JKX Oil & Gas	80½	+½		
381½	335½	KSC Adv Tech	350		1.2	
300	216½	LASMO	292	+6	0.8	77.7
47½	35½	Lasmo Units	40	+1	22.7	
92	67½	Monument	69½	-1½		38.1
3784½	2512½	Norsk Hydro	2737½	-6½	2.0	8.9
201	95½	Oil Search	108	+3		
61½	30½	Pelnor	47½	-½		
58	34½	Premier	45½	+½	1.5	8.8
65½	39	Pittencrieff Rs	43½	-3		27.8
669½	331	Ranger	400	-2	4.9	7.1
3300	2521½	Royal Dtch Fl	3100	+6½	3.0	
5618½	2850	Schlumberger†	4668½	-53½	1.0	
492	329½	Shell	435	+1½	3.4	24.2
404½	234½	SOCO Intl	348½			
7325	4668½	Total	6475	+52½	2.4	33.0
630½	187½	XCL	332½			

OTHER FINANCIAL

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
112½	84½	Aberdeen Asset	100½		4.7	30.3
640	290	AMVESCAP	615	+27	1.1	26.8
153	105½	BWD	151½		6.4	13.2
87½	45½	Barry Bch Hdl	54½		6.9	13.5
363	263	Biotec Inv	355½	+1½		
352½	182½	Brewin Dolphin	352½		3.4	
822	389½	Caledonia	797½		3.0	21.2
3550	2225	Camellia	3300		1.3	14.0
506½	263	Cattles	497½	+1½	2.2	27.3
61½	40½	Christie	43	-½	2.9	14.1
687½	356½	Close Bros	681½	+5½	2.2	22.9
610	453	EFM	471	+4	6.6	16.7
68½	20	Exco	20½		22.0	8.0
26½	12½	Fisheries Inf	26½		2.5	18.8
257½	194	Friends Ivory Sime	215½		4.3	
369½	270	Gerrard	340	-1	5.9	15.3
278½	213	Hambros	262	+½	3.6	25.1
1705	1125	Henderson	1630		2.5	22.5
174½	142½	Hitachi Cred	174½		3.1	16.1
175	94½	Investment Co.	175		2.5	
268½	134½	Jardine Strat	188	-1½	5.2	8.3
155½	72½	Johnson Fry	129½		3.6	14.3
635	485	Leopold J	615		4.1	27.0
592	429½	Liberty Intl	582	+7	3.8	26.5
483½	288½	Lon Forfaitng†	417½	-5	3.7	13.9
239½	165½	London Pacific	182	+½	9.7	5.4
132	95½	Lon Scot Bkt	132		3.2	23.3
263½	170½	Man ED & F	256½	-4	5.3	10.4
1637½	1007½	M & G	1585		3.2	25.3
1710	1172½	MAM	1691		3.6	28.8
228½	113½	Paragon	220	-1½	1.6	8.9
3370	2155	Perpetual	3325		2.3	22.4
990½	500	Provident	959½	+4	2.6	27.3
537½	303	Rathbone Bs	535		2.8	18.9
80½	39½	Rea Brothers	65		2.2	19.3
64½	44½	Rutland Tst	56		3.2	13.0
157½	80	SEC Group	88½	+2½	7.2	6.9
445	382	S & U	386	+4½	6.0	10.2
2385	1370	Schroders	2370	+140	1.1	24.5
2000	1225	Schroders N/V	1990	+40	1.3	20.5
710	522½	Sextan Tst	710		3.7	15.5
189½	127½	Singer & Fried	189	-½	3.6	13.3
55½	29½	Towry Law	50½	+1		
5½	1½	Trio Hldgs	3½			
106½	65	Union	70			
54	20½	Versailles Grp	49		1.1	29.5
427½	310	Wintrust†	423½		4.2	17.2

PHARMACEUTICALS

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
285	82	Brit Biotech	88	-4		
1115	582½	Cantab Pharms	715			
673	247½	Celltech	312½	+7½		
443½	215	Chiroscience	257½			
205	182	Cortecs	189½	+4		
1983	885½	Glaxo Wellf	1656	+34	2.1	31.9
245	75½	ML Laboratories	115½	+1½		
330½	140	Medeva†	158½	+3	3.5	7.3
403	228½	Peptide Thera	294			
439½	177½	Powderject	414	+2		
92½	24½	Proteus Intl	83½	+2		
84	56	Ransom (Wm)†	62½	-½	5.1	12.6
737½	237½	Scotia	316			
371½	216	Shire Pharms	330½	+½		
95	45	ShyePharms	73			
888	394½	SmithKline†	808	+28	1.4	41.0
392	180	Therp Antl Inc	209			
707½	367½	Vanguard	537½			
131½	40½	Vanguard Wts	106½			
435	145	Xenova	215	+1½		
2778	1565½	Zeneca	2648	+33	1.8	34.1

PRINTING & PAPER

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
142	86	AG Holdings	86½		9.0	11.2
782	520	API	687½		2.5	16.8
117½	47½	Apa Holo	98½	-1		
208	145½	Arjo Wiggins	198½	+½	4.1	10.7
24	17½	Bath Press	20½		3.3	8.6
457½	369½	Bemrose	449½	+½	4.3	13.0
223½	130	Blagden	151	-1½	2.2	9.8
3490½	2178½	Bowater Inc	3103½			
328½	232½	Bowater Intl	308½		1.3	21.2
745	429	Br Polythene	474	+1	5.5	
27½	10½	Br Thornton	25½			
148	49	Britton Grp	138½		1.3	15.6
278½	189	Bunzl	267	+5½	2.8	15.2
233½	118½	Capital Inds	125	+1½	5.0	10.3
386½	248½	Cropper (James)	373		2.4	8.9
673½	248½	De La Rue	265	+2½	10.5	7.4
267½	185½	Dolphin Pack	254½		3.7	14.7
78½	35½	Fairway Group	68½		7.3	21.1
238	70	Ferguson Intl	77		21.5	5.8
184½	120½	Filofax	166		2.9	11.5
134	56½	Inveresk	71½	+1	10.7	
248½	177½	James Porter	185½		5.1	10.9
452	205	Low & Bonar	338	-1½	5.1	10.9
128½	65½	MY Holdings	78½	+½	4.4	10.4
198½	142½	Mackintosh?	142½	-1	8.7	12.8
335	81½	Photobition	293½	+10	0.6	48.6
179½	140½	Plysu	161½		6.2	12.3
33	19½	Porter Chadburn	30	+1	9.3	9.6
371	222½	REXAM†	265	-7½	7.2	17.8
557½	311	St Ives Gp	513	-½	2.8	15.8
665½	227½	Sappi	271½	+½	3.2	
50	7½	Security & General	33½			
115½	67½	Skillaw	105		2.7	38.0
314	165½	Smith David†	221½	+4	4.6	13.8
214½	135½	Smurfit (Jeff)	163½	+3	2.8	14.2
182	86½	Somic	108		3.6	11.8
149½	103	Tinsley Robor	137		2.7	15.2
105	16	Wace	24½	+1½	5.9	
328½	230½	Waddington	249½		5.4	11.0
448	175	Watmough	335½		3.9	17.2
258½	180½	Wyndeham	259½	+3	2.6	15.6

PROPERTY

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
111	89½	Allied Lon	107½		4.2	13.0
177½	135	Asda	162	+2	2.2	25.6
40	25½	Asbpay Grp	28½			
149½	124½	Asolone Hldgs	148½		4.2	16.0
246½	163½	Beechcroft	246½		1.5	38.4
282½	223½	Bilton	280½	+½	4.8	21.0
220½	149	Birkby†	160		6.8	10.7
12½	3	Bolton Gp	4			
64	38½	Boone End	59½		2.5	72.8
319½	259½	Bradford	316		3.6	22.1
781	498	Br Land	740	-20	1.5	42.3
255	166½	Brixton	249	-3½	4.6	21.5
159	98½	Burford	117		2.4	39.5
144	112	CLS Hldgs	138		5.1	15.6
305½	210½	Cap & Regnl	305½	+2½	1.2	25.9
458½	358½	Cap Shop Ctrs	454½	+5½	2.6	29.3
296½	195	Cardiff Propt	278½		7.4	25.8
14½	8½	Carlisle	11	+1½		48.3
14½	8½	Catley Intl	9			41.4
418½	279	Chelsfield	414½		0.9	62.2
670	560	Chesterfield	602		2.8	
81	19½	Chesterton Intl#	36		3.5	
57½	35½	City Site Ests	37½	-½		30.0
133	90	Cleveland Tst	98	+1½	7.8	12.2
87½	59½	CNC Props	84½		4.6	8.4
222½	139½	Compco	220½		2.4	18.4
1650	1335	Daejan	1642½		3.1	15.7
27½	11½	Dares Estates	17			10.5
110	56	Debenham Tsen	110		3.2	12.8
85	65½	Delancey Ests	79½		2.4	16.2
209½	164½	Dencora	202½		2.8	11.7
585	458	Derwent Hldgs	555		1.4	35.4
307½	205½	Developments Sec	302½		1.2	18.7
202½	111	Edge Properties	196	-2		21.0
425	360	Estates Agency	420		4.9	28.1
85	57½	Estates Gen	83½		1.2	
158½	129½	Evans Of Leeds	144½		3.0	16.8
40½	25½	Five Oaks	40½		2.8	13.6
42½	27½	Fletcher King	40		6.2	13.2
74½	61½	Follies Group	63½		3.9	4.8
71½	57½	Follies Group cv	59		4.2	4.3
604	461	Frogmore	523½		4.8	15.9
25½	14½	Golden Land Inv	15½			
384½	263½	Grainger	326		2.9	
296	192	Gt Portland	286		3.9	31.4
182½	116½	Grantchester	178½	+½	0.7	53.7
228	147½	Greycoat	225		0.8	28.4
142½	94	Hambro Colyr	128		2.4	8.4
527½	397	Hammerson	493½	+3	2.8	31.8
36	25	Hampton Trust	28½			
605	388½	Helical Bar	587½		2.2	18.1
48½	34½	Hemingway	47		1.5	15.6
60½	17½	High Point	35			
215½	69½	HK Land	102½	+2	7.2	18.7
375	148	Jermyn	275		2.8	
117½	80½	LSH	105½	+½	1.9	7.7
122½	85	Lands Imp	89½		6.6	20.2
1190	635½	Land Sec	1082	+2	3.1	31.4
49½	31	Lon & Assoc	35		3.0	14.2
11½	3½	Lon & Metro	8½	-½		
126½	97½	Lon Merch Sec	127		4.8	11.7
687½	428½	MEPC	563	-7	3.8	25.6
133½	65	MWB Group	100½	-1	3.1	
147	101½	McKay Secs	138		3.0	20.5
65½	43½	Marriott?	65½		4.3	31.7
333	228	Milner Estt	328	-1½	2.7	15.7
221½	148½	Minerva	221½	+1	0.9	
33½	23½	Moorfield Est	27		2.3	
1900	1309½	Mountview	1825	+35	2.9	12.8
169	125	Muckow (A&J)	168½	+½	5.5	18.2
48	31½	OEM	37½			1.7
65½	45½	OPB	58½			
38½	24½	Olives Prop	34½		2.2	
732½	471½	Peel	679	-1½	1.5	
308½	194½	Pillar Prop	302½		2.1	44.7
15	9½	Premier Land	10½			
204½	131½	Quintain	193		2.9	32.3
35½	20½	Raglan	25½		5.9	10.1
48½	25½	Regalian	31½	-1	4.3	15.6
172½	105½	Rugby Est	171		1.8	22.6
85	61½	St Modwen Prpt	77½		4.8	
73	51½	Saville Grdn (J)	68		5.5	25.8
143	91	Savills	142½		3.3	10.0
103	79½	Scot Mar	95½		3.9	17.2
232	156	Shaftesbury	220		1.3	51.0
404½	260½	Slough Estates	394	-2	2.9	27.9
287½	193	Smart (J)	252½		4.9	9.4
100½	75½	TBI	98½	+1	2.6	37.7
198½	163½	Tops Estst	192½		1.7	41.7
115	82½	Town Centre	104½		4.5	13.1
169½	123½	Trafford Park	155		3.1	17.4
132½	87½	UK Land	87½	-1	4.3	11.9
278½	208½	Warnerf	269½		6.0	18.9
268	208	Warford	255		3.8	16.1
112½	86½	Wates A	100			
37½	19	Whitney Metal	29½			
450½	327½	Workspace Grp	448½	-1	4.3	16.5

RETAILERS, GENERAL

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
303½	188½	Alexon	263½			14.7
266	174½	Alders	219½	-1	4.6	13.7
320	149½	Allied Carpets	157½		0.3	12.3
508	302	Arcadia	489	+½	0.3	13.7
788½	380	Argos	606	-3	3.9	19.2
168	19½	Ashley (Laura)	24	-2	2.2	86.2
255½	179½	Austin Reed	183½		4.6	12.2
364½	287½	Boulet	331½		2.6	11.5
171½	141½	Beattie (J)	162½	+1	6.5	12.2
161½	119½	Bentalls	141	+½	2.6	5.1
652	359½	Blacks Lrs	479½		1.3	19.6
208½	109	Body Shop	117½		5.6	11.8
974	597½	Booker	901	+6	2.9	30.9
52½	11½	Brown & Jacksn	46	-½		12.4
451	375	Brown (N)	444½		2.0	24.5
624½	390	Carpetright	426	+12	6.2	14.1
323½	230	Church Inv?	257½	-1	2.7	19.6
550	400	Church	402½		5.0	12.3
114½	59½	Clinton Cards	132½		2.7	14.3
134	85	C'try Casuals	130		1.0	
241	148½	Country Gdns	230		1.3	
815	332½	Courts Furnish	325	+35	1.3	16.1
656	430	DFS Furniture	445	+6	3.6	17.9
438	376½	Debenhams	301		0.7	18.3
723	462	Dixons Grp	511½	+1	2.7	15.4
53½	19½	Elec Boutique	52			27.0
6	2½	ERA Gp	4½			
103½	46½	Essex Furn	56	+8½	8.4	11.3
142½	102½	Etam	133½		1.2	
170	156	Falkland Isls	159			17.3
207	146½	Fine Art Dev	191½		6.3	14.8
315	112½	Fired Earth	271½		1.1	22.4
524½	177½	Flying Flw Uts	515½	-1½	1.8	
149½	70½	Formlnster	95½		3.3	41.1
407½	267	French Conn	402½		0.9	16.7
53½	34½	Gloves	40½		3.5	
404½	237½	Goldsmiths Gp	242½	-5	3.8	13.9
162½	115½	Grampian Hdg	135	+1	6.2	11.1
805	579	GUS†	797	+8	2.9	20.2
343½	231½	H&C Furnshng	313½	-3	2.8	32.5
401½	220½	Hamleys	246	-1½	4.7	13.6
97½	59½	Hampden Grp	93½		4.0	8.8
231	136	Hse of Fraser	186½		4.1	
135½	70½	Hughes (TJ)	129½		5.4	
823½	268	JJB Sports	786	-½	0.8	38.0
1070	627½	Kingfisher	1007½	-2	2.5	22.0
450	259	Liberty	287½	-2½	1.2	
200	25½	Limelight	39½	-½		29.1
200½	93½	MFI	95½	-2½	6.4	10.3
683	458½	Marks Spencer	570	-16½	2.9	20.8
48½	22½	Merchant Retail	41½		1.1	29.6
287	216½	Moss Bros	217½		3.2	14.6
860	523½	Next	753	+41	2.7	22.0
42	26	Oliver (G)	31½	+1½		
535	382½	Oxfierse Intl	402		3.9	
187½	50	Partners	53½	-2	1.2	9.9
90½	67½	Partridge Fine	82½		7.8	7.0
40½	25½	QS Hldgs	27½			
337½	256½	Rossbys	302½		3.6	16.0
142½	50½	Sere Group	95	+2½	9.3	7.1
95½	46½	Sears	51½		9.0	39.3
39½	26½	Signet Group	37½	-½		0.7
507½	333½	Smith WH	493	+½	3.0	
1220	810	Sotheby's†	1137½		2.1	
359½	184	Storehouse	259½	-1½	4.0	13.1
150	71½	Style	75		7.8	
288½	135	Thorn	152	-½	10.9	8.4
203½	87½	Tie Rack	88½		4.7	8.9
340	200	UNO	241		2.5	19.6
4	2½	Upton & South	2½			13.8
543½	324½	Vendome	490		2.7	18.3
417½	132½	Wickes	267	+5½	0.9	
348½	232½	Wyevale	348½	+3	2.4	23.1

SUPPORT SERVICES

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
645	386	AEA Tech	617½		1.8	29.4
200	142	Aggreko	180		2.4	15.2
114	68	Alpha Airpts	78		8.6	7.4
56	32½	Alphameric	36			17.5
72½	28½	Ande Gp	70			
456	254	Atkins WS	438½		2.1	25.8
198½	112½	BMB Res	185		4.9	10.2
686	384½	BPP	683	+5	2.6	27.0
797½	416	BTG	703		0.2	
100½	69½	Brooks Service	98½		4.6	14.5
777½	432	Business Post	787½	+2½	1.8	33.0
2276	840	CMG	2272½	+72½	0.4	73.7
414	220½	CRT Gpt	412½		1.3	57.4
892½	580	Cawa Gp	890	-2½	1.2	8.7
466½	161½	Capita Group	436½		0.6	
9	6	Chemex	7½		3.4	9.2
250	172½	Corp Services	219	+3½	3.4	15.9
58½	24½	Coults Cnstig	30½		6.4	
517	217½	DCS Gp	491	+22	0.4	38.7
780	206	Dadia Bs Sys	247	+8	1.4	10.6
358½	232½	Davis Service	353½		3.8	30.3
910	640	Delphi	700	+5	1.3	
957½	290	Diagonal	952½	-2½	0.3	
387½	170	Dudley Jenkins†	375		1.8	25.8
79½	37	EW Fact	56½		4.4	9.8
100	49	El Data Prct	57½		4.8	12.8
1502½	470	FI Group▼	1430		0.5	79.4
400	175	Harvey Nash	330	+7	1.3	
954	515	Hays	935	-7	1.3	32.4
313½	194½	Hogg Robnsn	288	-½	4.4	13.4
1257½	530	JBA Hldgs	660	-17½	1.0	32.7
295	207	Johnson Clean	263½		5.6	10.4
114½	48½	Kalamazoo	49½	-½	10.7	
718	521½	Kewill Sys	695	-1½	1.8	18.7
37½	13½	Lane-Scan	16½			
381½	153½	Lavendon	358½	-1	7.4	28.0
1532½	671	Logica	1472½	-7½	0.9	42.2
717½	280	Lorient	690	+5	1.4	
190½	77	Lynx Group	185½	-1½	1.3	27.2
82	20	MDIS	48			
920	415	MMT Comp	900		1.6	30.3
144½	85	MR Group	126		4.0	16.5
492½	312½	Mazza 4t	375	-2½	8.6	10.8
82½	37½	Menhaneer Abbey†	62		1.3	18.5
3550	913½	Micro Focus	3532½	+40		52.1
178½	53	Microgen†	56½		11.1	7.5
2780	1964½	Misys†	2677½	+12½	0.6	44.8
270	155½	MITIE Gp	236½	+½	1.2	25.8
53½	30½	Nero Group	53½		3.7	12.1
55½	33½	Oxbt	49	+½	3.4	13.1
615	220	PSD	602½	-7½	1.1	27.7
836½	427½	Parity	812½		0.8	
380	226½	Pegasus	273½		3.4	11.5
210	98	Porta	208½	+1½	1.3	10.6
217½	108½	Photo-Me	204		3.4	19.5
44	18½	Proudfoot	37			
293	165	RCO	229		9.6	27.0
270	129½	RPS Group	255		2.4	
65	25½	Railsoft?	39	+5	3.5	
447½	198	Real Time	427½	-2½	1.8	14.7
112½	58½	Rebus	109	+2½	2.2	23.9
169	108½	Reed Executive	162	-1½	2.2	9.3
190	100	Reliance Sec	165		5.2	14.6
325	197½	Rentokil†	308½	-7½	1.1	33.8
195½	109½	Ricardo Group	193	-2	4.3	24.0
556½	135½	Robert Walters	527½	+2	0.9	
505	287½	Rolfe & Nolan	480	+3½		
392½	204½	Royalblue	385	-2	0.9	
1420	517½	Sage Gp	1275	+47½	0.3	54.3
185	61½	Sanderson	103½	+5	5.9	9.7
672½	338	Select App	663½	+3½	0.7	28.3
2080	1065	Serco Gp	2066	-2½	0.4	52.7
1161½	855	Serco Gp	1145	+15	0.7	47.7
180	124½	Shanks & McEwan	178	+½	2.8	22.5
742½	195	Shared Intl	740	+12½	0.9	
57	30	Simon Grp	55½	+2		
102½	37½	Sinclair?	49½			
285	125½	Skillsgroup	262	-8½	2.0	
232½	114	Slot-Plus	115	+½	13.0	
475	52½	Superscape VR	182	-1½		
105½	49½	Toner	97½		2.7	15.9
3850	190½	Tyco Intl	3050		0.2	
108½	54½	WSP Group	98	+2½	3.3	15.3
300	210	Wagner Hewsn?	210		6.5	9.5
384½	175	Waste Mgl Intl	189			33.3
357½	209½	Waste Recyc	345½		0.8	38.3
238½	127½	Whitehead Mann	237½		2.4	19.6
72½	45½	White Young Gm	64½		6.8	10.0
394½	294½	Williams	388	+13	4.8	16.3

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
672	368½	BT	589	-3	4.0	17.0
1350	270	COLT Telecom	1335	+65		
702½	420	Cable Wireless	655	+9½	2.0	27.5
362½	206½	Cable&Wire Comm	348½	+7		
521½	251½	Energis	470	-1½		
315	167½	Euro Telecom	283	-1	1.2	23.8
200	77½	General Cable	132½	+½		
335	184½	Orange	332	+4		
377	249½	Securicor†	346		0.6	44.9
134½	61½	TeleWest	82½			
560	240	Vodafone	539½	+23½	1.2	44.4

TRANSPORT

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
262	169½	Air London	233	-1	3.5	14.3
462½	219	All Nippon Air	334½	-4½	0.4	
447½	329½	Aviva?	426		4.1	11.9
352	247	Assoc Br Ports	352	+8½	3.2	17.8
327	262	Autologic	326		2.9	22.3
216	124	Avis Europe	208½	-7	2.0	21.5
624½	402½	BAA	563	+7	2.8	17.2
763½	498	Br Airways	577	+11	3.4	28.9
112½	87½	Clarkson (H)	100	+3½	5.0	9.3
162½	111½	Clydeport Ops	140		4.5	8.2
347½	197½	Dart	335		2.5	16.4
86	54½	Eurotunnel Uts	54½	-1		
308	184½	FirstGroup	280	+34½	2.4	21.9
757	118½	Fisher (James)	127		2.9	9.1
665	530	Forth Ports	622½		2.7	15.8
593½	424	Go-Ahead	560		2.0	18.3
580	388½	Goode Durrant	580		2.3	17.1
441	189½	Helphire Gp	410	-10	0.7	50.4
1030	405	Irish Cont†	1030		0.6	22.0
104	69½	Jacobs	81½		3.1	36.3
98½	60	Lon O'Seas Fds	87½	-5		
358½	368	Mersey Docks	349½	+½	3.4	20.2
185½	121½	NFC	174	-1	4.1	18.2
792½	434	Natl Express	779	-15½	1.9	17.3
720	446½	Ocean Group	720	+11½	2.5	21.8
119½	82½	Ocean Wilsons	55½		5.0	17.1
822	569½	P & O Dfd	815	+19	4.7	22.1
120	101	P & O 5.5%	111½		6.2	
1121	540	Railtrack	920		3.1	17.5
135½	89½	Salvesen (C)	128½		5.6	18.5
53½	32	Seacon	46½		3.5	34.4
255	244	Seascope Ship	246½		6.3	8.3
505	180	Servisair	239	-1	2.7	21.8
867	565½	Stagecoach	826½		1.5	18.8
652½	542½	Tibbet & Britn	567½	+12½	3.6	15.8
252½	162½	TDG	231½		5.3	14.7
96½	65½	Uglad	94½	-½	2.9	12.7
109½	39½	Utd Carriers	67½		7.6	8.9

WATER

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
830	677½	Anglian	826	+11	5.4	11.3
335	203	East Surrey	320		4.4	13.0
1053½	740	Hyder†	942½		6.0	8.0
140½	101½	Hyder Cv Pf	139½	+½	8.2	
770	532½	Mid Kent Hlgs	767½	-2½	5.1	11.4
1085	663	Severn Trent	913	+5	5.1	10.1
3390	2755	South Staffs	3390		1.5	14.0
1005	586½	South West	885	+4	5.4	11.2
970	593½	Thames	888	+1	5.0	10.0
890	605½	Utd Utilities	783	-5	6.1	12.7
550	344½	Wessex	481½	+7½	4.9	9.3
545	325	Yorkshire	511	+5½	4.9	10.0

RETAILERS, FOOD

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
212	105½	ASDA Group†	188½	-1½	2.1	17.7
73½	38½	Budgen	68½	-½	2.7	13.0
72½	41½	Dairy Farm Intl	65½	+½	5.6	
245½	181½	Fitfall?	181½		3.5	13.0
62½	35½	Fitzwilton	37½		7.6	10.3
135	88	Fyffes†	135		1.5	15.8
2200	1335	Greggs	2100	+85	2.2	
154½	76½	Iceland Group	148½		4.5	12.1
353½	265	Kwik Save	348½		7.2	12.5
261½	144	Morrison (W)	244		0.9	21.4
57½	38	Park Foods†	40	+1	8.3	11.6
8½	5½	Regina Hlth	7			
430	307	Safeway	374½	-12½	4.7	13.4
539	307	Sainsbury J	478	-1	3.3	19.1
308½	161½	Somerfield	299½	-½	4.4	10.3
244½	152½	T & S Stores	238½	+4½	4.2	13.3
578½	327	Tesco	525½	+6½	2.5	21.0
298½	189½	Thorntons	287½		2.5	23.1
550	336½	Watsons? Philipt	502½		4.0	16.3

ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
370	84½	Abacus Recruit	367½	-2½	0.7	18.4
217	170	Cale Inns▼	196		1.9	14.8
262½	156	Dawson Hidgst	177½	-1	3.5	15.4
51½	26½	Freesages	32			
98½	53½	Megabmedia	53½		8.5	28.4
85	22½	Memory Corp	30	-3		
380	200	Prism Rail	355	+5	3.2	
1352	695	Ramco Egy	735		6.2	
810	619½	Southern News	810	+4	3.3	15.7
94½	65½	Southern Vecis	92½		2.8	14.3
60½	14½	Trocadero†	18½			

Source: FT Information

Price at suspension; † Ex dividend; ‡ Ex scrip; ▲ Ex rights issue; ▼ Ex all; § Ex capital distribution; * Figures or report awaited; .. No significant data. Companies in bold are constituents of the FTSE 100 Index.

BRITISH FUNDS

1997/98 High	Low	Stock	Price £	+/-	Int yld %	Gross red yld
SHORTS (under 5 years)						
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 9¾% 1998	116½		3.38	7.68
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 7¼% 1998	100		7.25	7.36
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 14% 1998-01	101⅞	-⅛	13.81	7.04
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 15½% 1998	104⅜	-⅛	14.87	6.98
[illegible]	[illegible]	Exch 12% 1999	103⅝		11.61	7.22
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 9½% 1999	102⅝		9.31	6.97
[illegible]	[illegible]	Exch 12¼% 1999	105⅜	-⅛	11.63	6.94
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 10½% 1999	104⅛		10.08	6.84
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 6% 1999	99⅜		6.06	6.69
[illegible]	[illegible]	Conv 10¼% 1999	105⅝	-⅛	9.71	6.71
[illegible]	[illegible]	Conv 9% 2000	104⅝		8.62	6.67
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 8% 2000	103⅝	+⅛	7.71	6.49
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 13% 2000	110⅝		8.23	6.62
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 13% 2000	113½	-⅛	11.44	6.71
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 10% 2001	109⅝	-⅛	9.16	6.55
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 7% 2001	101¼	-⅛	6.87	6.39
MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)						
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 7% 2002	102⅞	+⅛	6.82	6.25
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 9¾% 2002	113⅝	+⅛	8.62	6.35
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 8% 2003	107⅞	+⅛	7.42	6.12
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 10% 2003	117⅛	+⅛	8.56	6.28
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 11½% 2001-04	113⅜	+⅛	10.14	6.57
[illegible]	[illegible]	Fund 3½% 1999-04	91⅛	+⅛	3.87	5.64
[illegible]	[illegible]	Conv 9½% 2004	117⅛	+⅛	8.08	6.27
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 6¾% 2004	102⅝	+⅛	6.53	6.16
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 8½% 2005	114⅛	+⅛	7.43	6.09
[illegible]	[illegible]	Conv 9½% 2005	119⅝	+⅛	9.00	6.18
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 12½% 2003-05	129⅛	+⅛	9.66	6.29
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 7¾% 2006	109⅝	+⅛	6.85	6.09
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 7¾% 2006	110⅞	+⅛	7.01	6.13
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 8% 2002-06	108⅛	+⅛	7.53	6.39
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 11¾% 2003-07	125⅞	+⅛	6.67	6.34
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 8½% 2007	116⅛	+⅛	7.38	6.12
109⅝	95⅝	Treas 7¼% 2007	109⅝	+⅛	6.66	6.04
124⅞	108½	Treas 9% 2008	122⅝	+⅛	7.33	6.04
117½	101	Treas 8% 2009	115⅝	+⅛	6.90	6.05
102⅛	86⅝	Treas 6¼% 2010	101⅝	+⅛	6.15	6.06
127½	109⅛	Conv 9% 2011	126⅛	+⅛	7.12	6.06
127⅞	109⅛	Treas 9% 2012	127⅝	+⅛	7.05	6.03
96⅞	80⅝	Treas 5½% 2008-12	96⅛	+⅛	5.74	5.93
116⅞	98⅝	Treas 7¾% 2012-15	115⅝	+⅛	6.74	6.12
LONGS (over 15 years)						
120⅝	100⅝	Treas 8% 2013	118⅝	+⅛	6.73	6.09
122⅝	101⅞	Treas 8% 2015	121⅝	+⅛	6.60	6.02
132⅝	107⅞	Treas 8¾% 2017	130⅝	+⅛	6.70	6.05
126⅝	101⅝	Tr 8% 2021	124⅝	+⅛	6.40	5.99
UNDATED						
53½	43⅝	War Ln 3½%	57⅝	+⅛	6.09	
40½	30⅝	Treas 2½%	40½	+⅛	6.21	
64⅝	49⅝	Consols 4%	62⅝	+⅛	6.37	
INDEX-LINKED on projected inflation of:					5%	3%
137⅛	184⅝	Treas IL 2½% 2001	196⅝	+⅛	2.76	3.07
[illegible]	190⅝	Treas IL 2½% 2003	194⅝	+⅛	2.85	3.08
125⅝	117⅝	Treas IL 4⅝% 2004	129⅝	+⅛	2.82	3.00
208⅝	170	Treas IL 2% 2006	209⅝	+⅛	2.92	3.05
189⅝	170⅝	Treas IL 2½% 2009	189⅝	+⅛	2.94	3.04
198⅝	176⅝	Treas IL 2½% 2011	197⅝	+⅛	2.96	3.05
164⅝	144⅝	Treas IL 2½% 2013	164⅝	+⅛	2.97	3.05
178⅝	153⅝	Treas IL 2½% 2016	177⅝	+⅛	2.98	3.06
172⅝	147⅝	Treas IL 2½% 2020	172⅝	+⅛	3.01	3.07
145⅝	122⅝	Treas IL 2½% 2024	144⅝	+⅛	3.00	3.05
143⅝	119⅝	Treas IL 4⅛% 2030	142⅝	+⅛	3.00	3.02

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BUSINESS 30
Corridors of power to pleasure palace

BUSINESS

WEEKEND MONEY
SECTION 2

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

SATURDAY MARCH 7 1998

BMW in plan to triple sales at R-R

BY ALAN COPPS

BMW, favourite to acquire *Rolls-Royce Motors from* Vickers, plans a threefold increase in annual sales to 6,000 cars and an eventual doubling of the workforce at the company's Crewe factory if its bid succeeds.

BMW, which provides the engine and many components for the new Silver *Seraph model, is tipped to* buy the prestige carmaker despite criticism by BMW chairman Bernd Pischetsrieder of Vickers' conduct of the sale. "I am keen but not desperate. We won't buy it at any price, we have to answer to shareholders," he said.

Rolls-Royce has already received more than 100 firm orders for the Silver Seraph, which was unveiled at the Geneva Motor Show this week.

Vickers has invested more than £200 million in Crewe over the past three years, and half the workforce has been retrained. Herr Pischetsrieder said: "The thing *that makes me mad is that* there are 2,500 people in Crewe not knowing what their future is."

Any other buyer would have to invest about £200 million straight away to replace the BMW input in the new model.

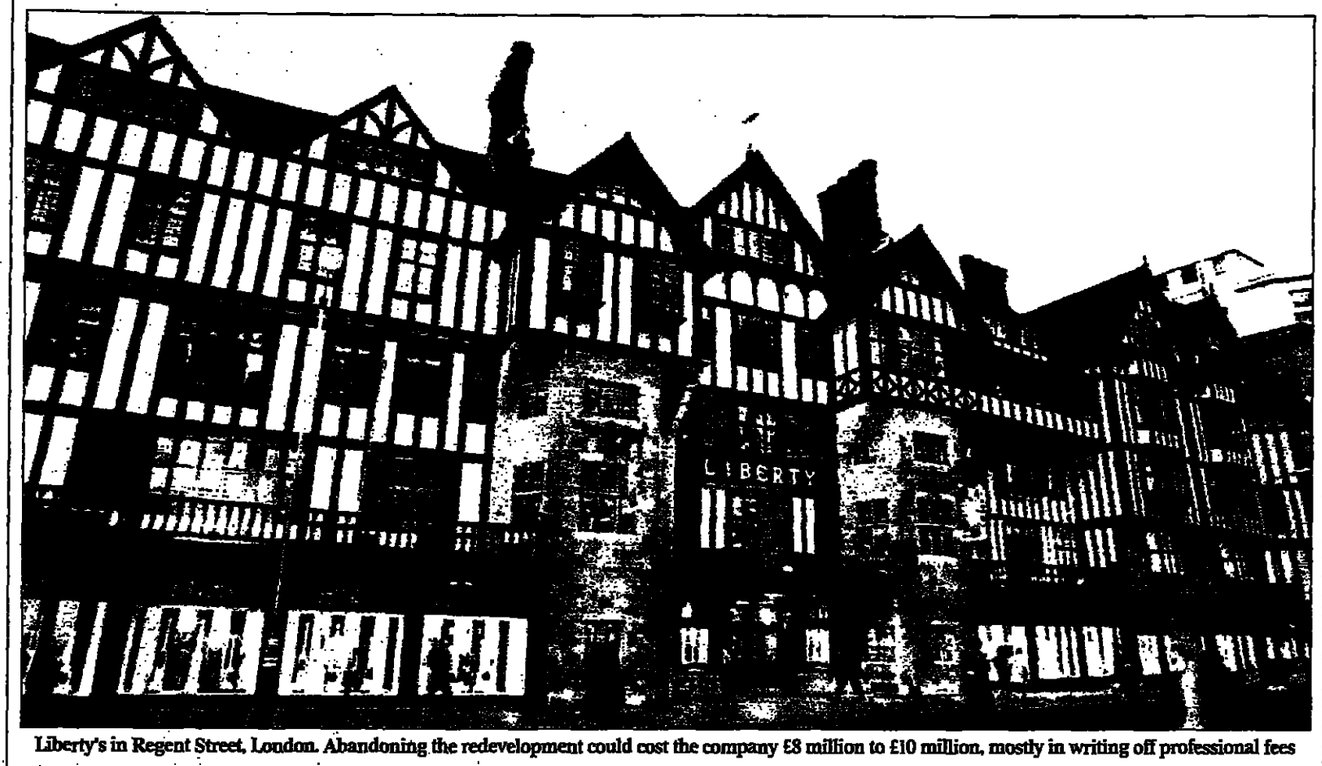
He said BMW is determined to get into the high-luxury market with or without Rolls-Royce. *Plans already exist for a* car that could be either a smaller Bentley or a BMW. He estimated it would cost £400 million to £500 million pounds to develop each of two new product lines for Rolls-Royce and Bentley to achieve his ambitions.

But there was no question of shifting production. "You could never have a Rolls-Royce or Bentley being built outside Britain," he said.

Most of the orders for the Silver Seraph have come from a selected band of 500 loyal Rolls-Royce owners invited to a special launch event.

Go, pages 45,47

New team sees scheme as financially unrealistic



Liberty's in Regent Street, London. Abandoning the redevelopment could cost the company £8 million to £10 million, mostly in writing off professional fees

Liberty abandons plans to redevelop flagship

BY PAUL DURMAN

THE new management team at Liberty has abandoned the £43 million redevelopment of its London department store, claiming the plans were financially unrealistic and set to produce "a significant write-off of shareholders' funds".

Liberty said Jones Lang Wootton, the surveying firm, told the previous board last October that the redevelopment would only increase the value of its three West End properties by between £13 million and £16 million — or by about a third of the development cost.

The company has also appointed David Malpas and *Victor Benjamin*, respectively the former managing director and deputy chairman of Tesco.

The new executive team is headed by Michele Jobling as managing director. Ms Jobling, 37, has also worked at Tesco, but was most recently general manager of the UK arm of Tambrands, the Tampax company. The fourth recruit, Liberty's finance director, is Brian Muirhead, previously deputy managing director at Whichford Group, a privately owned motor dealership.

Abandoning the redevelopment is set to cost Liberty £8-£10 million, mostly in writing off the professional fees due to SMC Landmark, the architects, and others involved. Settling these payments will delay the company's full-year results, which will show a substantial loss.

Liberty said even taking account of the substantial amounts already spent on the redevelopment, the plan was "clearly unacceptable". It listed nine flaws in the project begun under Denis Cassidy, its previous chairman. These included the huge scale of the commitment for a company with shareholders' funds of only £57.5 million, and the tiny margin by which projected returns of 8.1 per cent were expected to exceed Liberty's cost of capital.

Commentary, page 29

Robinson quit 15 boards just before rule change

BY CHRIS AYRES

GEOFFREY ROBINSON, the Paymaster General, re*signed 15 directorships only* weeks before new parliamentary rules would have forced him to disclose them.

The latest revelations about the multimillionaire minister's preference for not declaring all his business interests in the House of Commons register come as Sir Gordon Downey, the Parliamentary Commissioner, investigates Mr Robinson's affairs.

The minister's Conservative critics are also drawing attention to the fact that one company of which Mr Robinson was chairman was severely criticised by its auditors for its failure to keep proper accounts.

He was chairman of Hollis Industries, an engineering company which formed part of the empire controlled by Robert Maxwell, the disgraced *businessman.*

In 1990, when the criticism was made, Hollis was ultimately owned by the Maxwell Foundation, a tax avoiding trust in Liechtenstein. The accounts show that the chairman was paid a £200,000 salary in 1990. Mr Robinson's failure to disclose the position has already been described as a clear breach of Commons rules.

Coopers & Lybrand Deloitte, the accountants, attacked Hollis's book-keeping in the company's report for the 18 months to June 30, 1990.

"In our opinion, the system of accounting was unsatisfactory during the period and certain records of income and expenditure necessary for the purpose of our audit were not maintained by the company," Coopers' statement says. "Because of the significance of the matter ... we are unable to form an opinion as to whether the profit and loss account ... gives a true and fair view of the group's loss and source and application of funds for the period from January 1, 1989, to June 30, 1990."



Robinson: criticised

David Heathcoat-Amory, the Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury, last night called on Mr Robinson to give a public explanation.

"We know Geoffrey Robinson made most of his personal fortune with companies associated with Robert Maxwell," he said. "It seems one of them, *Hollis Industries, has had* a particularly murky past as reported by the auditors of the time. The only way to clear this matter up is by a full and candid explanation."

It has also emerged that Mr Robinson failed to declare his directorship of Transfer Technology for ten years until 1992, though he *did disclose* a shareholding in the group. Transfer Technology was at the heart of the scandal that erupted last year over Mr Robinson's links to an offshore trust.

The discovery will fuel accu*sations that the minister has* consistently failed to give Parliament an accurate picture of his financial interests.

His critics have been given further ammunition by documents filed with Companies House that show that Mr Robinson resigned 15 directorships on December 9, 1993, only weeks before new rules were introduced in January 1994 that would have forced *him to disclose them.*

All the companies, which ranged from speculative property ventures with links to the Maxwell family to dormant engineering businesses, were either subsidiaries of Transfer Technology or joint ventures.

Commentary, page 29

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	5782.9	(+87.3)
Yield	2.83%	
FTSE All share	2694.78	(+33.67)
Nikkei	17131.97	(+283.42)
New York:		
Dow Jones	8517.32	(+72.99)*
S&P Composite	1049.08	(+14.03)*

US RATE

Federal Funds	5½%*	(5 7/16%)
Long Bond	101 16/32*	(100 30/32)
Yield	6.01%*	(6.06%)

LONDON MONEY

3-mth interbank	7 1/2%	(7 9/16%)
Lffe long gilt future (Jun)	107 2/32	(106 31/32)q

STERLING

New York:		
$	1.6333*	(1.6340)
London:		
$	1.6372	(1.6428)
DM	2.9995	(3.0047)
FFr	10.0550	(10.0730)
SFr	2.4418	(2.4382)
Yen	209.30	(209.73)
£ Index	105.4	(105.6)

DOLLAR

London:		
DM	1.8355*	(1.8335)
FFr	6.1540*	(6.1485)
SFr	1.4945*	(1.4923)
Yen	128.40*	(127.78)
$ Index	109.1	(109.0)

Tokyo close Yen 127.24

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (May) $14.05 ($14.35)

GOLD

London close $294.25 ($293.75)

* denotes midday trading price

Rail bid

The company that owns the Great Eastern rail franchise has made an agreed bid of £140 million for the group that owns the Great Western *and North Western fran*chises. Analysts have already begun sniffing out the next franchise holders that may turn into bid targets. Page 28

Drug boost

Astra, the Swedish pharmaceuticals giant, has *considered Zeneca, its British* rival, as a potential merger partner, along with Bayer and Schering-Plough. Yesterday, however, Astra was keen to play down the merger talk. Page 28

Court out

Courts, the international retail group, rushed out an optimistic trading statement in fear of adverse reaction on the stock market to profit warnings earlier in the week from rivals MFI, DFS and *Carpetright. Courts managed* a sales rise of 38 per cent in the January sales. Page 29

Andersen's $46m De Lorean hit

BY JON ASHWORTH

ARTHUR ANDERSEN has been ordered to pay damages of $46.2 million (£28 million) plus interest going back to the early 1980s, for failing in its role as auditor to De Lorean, the ill-fated sports car manufacturer in Belfast. The final *cost to the firm, yet to be* determined, could be as high as $111 million.

On Thursday, a New York jury found against Arthur Andersen LLP on counts of negligence and breach of contract arising from its auditing of the De Lorean Motor Company (DMC). The action was *brought by De Lorean's* trustee in bankruptcy. Andersen remained defiant yesterday, saying: "The firm considers it has been the scapegoat for a commercial disaster that the officers and directors of DMC should have foreseen, as well as fraud perpetrated at the highest level of DMC. The firm believes that its position *will be vindicated through the* process of post-trial motions and appellate review."

De Lorean failed in 1981, with the loss of 2,000 jobs and costing taxpayers at least £78 million. The UK Government pumped huge sums into the project in west Belfast to help the province's economy.

*Three years after the col*lapse, the Government launched an action against Andersen, alleging conspiracy, fraud, negligence and incompetence in its auditing of the company. The case was settled in November, for £18 million.

Midshires poised to back RBS

BY ANNE ASHWORTH

THE Birmingham Midshires Building Society board is set to recommend the Royal Bank of Scotland's takeover offer to its members next *month, despite the growing* conviction that the sum offered for the society is too low.

RBS agreed last summer to pay up to £630 million for Midshires, but a rise in bank shares now makes this sum seem too low, with £750 million to £1 billion being estimated as more apt. However, *Midshires has resisted pres*sure to renegotiate the deal and its board now appears ready to recommend its terms.

Only four people have taken up an invitation to ring Michael Jackson, the Midshires chief executive, at home to discuss the price.

Pearson loses £212m on US sale

BY RAYMOND SNODDY, MEDIA EDITOR

PEARSON, the media and entertainment group, is to take a £212 million charge against its disastrous venture into the US CD-ROM market after the *disposal of Mindscape, an*nounced yesterday.

Mindscape is being sold to The Learning Company for $150 million (about £91.6 million) in cash and shares.

Marjorie Scardino, chief executive of Pearson, yesterday paid tribute to the "fine job" the team at Mindscape had *done in turning the company* round in the past year. In 1996 there were losses of £46 million but by last year this had been turned into an operating profit of around £1.65 million on sales of about £84.3 million.

The purchase in April 1994 has however been expensive for Pearson, both in terms of money and reputation. The total acquisition costs, including subsequent deals, totalled £397 million, excluding net *losses while in Pearson owner*ship of around £48 million.

Mindscape had a book value of £14 million and as a result of the disposal Pearson is writing back goodwill of £286 million, leading to a loss *on the disposal of £212 million.*

Mindscape develops and publishes CD ROMS for PCs and video games in entertainment, education and reference. Its best selling titles include Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing, The Complete National Geographic and Chessmaster 5500.

Tempus, page 31

Deal close at Hillier Parker

BY CARL MORTISHED

HILLIER PARKER, the surveying firm, is believed to be close to agreeing a takeover by CB Commercial, the US real estate practice. A deal could *mean the loss of independence* for yet another famous name in the London property market.

Richard Ellis International yesterday secured formal agreement at an extraordinary general meeting for a tie-up *with CB Commercial.* Barry White, REI's chief executive, said that the group had two options, to build up London business on its own or acquire one.

He said: "With Richard Ellis in the UK going with Insignia we need a first-class London presence." The international side of Richard Ellis split with *its UK arm when both struck* deals with separate US buyers.

A WEEK IN THE CITY

Enter the invisible brand name. De Beers, the South *African diamond* group, embarked on a bold marketing experiment this week, saying that it *intends to stamp* tiny imprints of its name on diamonds sold in jewellers. More visible were the fracture *lines at* Inchcape, which is to break itself up, and the red on City trading screens, as shares headed south.

Unsuspecting shoppers in Manchester will have the first pick of the De Beers-branded gems, which will carry the De Beers name and a serial number — both visible only under a microscope. The arrival of a diamond "kitemark" comes at a time of sharply reduced diamond sales, blamed on the strength of the US dollar (in which diamonds are priced), and the collapse in Asian currencies, which has resulted in a sharp drop in sales across Asia.

Asia provided the last twist of the knife at Inchcape, which has seen its shares halve in recent months on fears about the company's exposure to the region.

Bottling operations in South America are to be spun off, as is a *Far Eastern marketing arm*, allowing Inchcape to focus on car imports and distribution.

There were grating gears at the Geneva motor show as BMW launched a scathing attack on Vickers over its handling of the sale of Rolls-Royce Motor Cars. BMW, which makes engines for the new generation of Rolls-Royce cars, accused Vickers of conducting a "poker game" over negotiations. It is nevertheless thought to remain the favourite to buy the British carmaker.

One of the UK's more tortuous bid battles took a new turn, as two *American suitors, PacifiCorp and* Texas Utilities, lifted their competing bids for The Energy Group, owner of Eastern Electricity.

Halifax announced plans to buy back £1 billion of its shares over the next year. Analysts expressed disappointment that the former building society's £4 billion cash pile was not being put to better use.

The 12-year feud between Mohamed Al Fayed and Tiny Rowland entered a new phase when the Harrods owner was arrested after voluntarily presenting himself at Kennington police station in south London. Mr Al *Fayed was questioned over allega*tions that Harrods employees broke into a safe deposit box owned by the former Lonrho chairman. The two men famously made up in 1993, but the truce lasted about as long as Guy Snowden's lunch with Richard Branson.

Fear and loathing erupted among pension funds when it emerged that the Inland Revenue has its eye on hundreds of millions of pounds in tax credits paid out before a loophole was closed in 1996. Shares took a knock two days running on fears that interest rates might have to go up. The Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee decided against an increase, but the market was rattled all the same.

Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade, announced a three-year review of company law, but held off from legislation aimed at forcing changes in corporate governance.

On the high street, a dismal February resulted in a clutch of profits warnings from MFI, DFS and Carpetright, sending retail shares into a tail-spin. And you could really see the cracks.

JON ASHWORTH

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Dresdner RCM Global Investors

GE Capital bid agreed by Barcom

GE CAPITAL, the US financial services group, has made an agreed £41.1 million bid for Barcom, the UK fleet management company. GE is offering 72p in cash per Barcom share, against Thursday's closing price of 49p. It has irrevocable undertakings to accept for 55 per cent.

In its last financial year, Barcum made pre-tax profits of £4 million, up from £2.7 million, on turnover of £56.1 million, up from £52.5 million. The shares have fallen from a five-year high of 98p in 1994.

GE is investing heavily in Britain and Ireland, having acquired Central Transport Rental (formerly Tiphook), Woodchester Investments and TIP Europe.

Tarmac buys

Tarmac has bought the US concrete paving business of Marshalls for $31.5 million (£19.2 million). It has cash of $5.9 million and factories in Florida, Georgia and Tennessee. It enable Tarmac's US operation to increase its share of the fast-growing commercial paving market.

Pub deal

The Old English Pub Company has bought eight freehold coaching inns for £7.8 million in cash and shares. They were bought individually and have total annual sales of £4.85 million.

Dobbies offer

Dobbies Garden Centres is to raise £5.3 million in a placing and open offer on the basis of three shares for eight at 310p a share.

FirstGroup to take over Great Western for £140m

BY GEORGE SIVELL

FIRSTGROUP, the rail and road company that runs the Great Eastern rail franchise from Liverpool Street to Essex and Suffolk, has revealed an agreed £140 million bid for the Great Western rail group.

FirstGroup has a minority holding in Great Western and is bidding £105 million for the 74.7 per cent of the stock that it does not already own.

The offer values each Great Western share at £37. The shares were last valued at £22 by Great Western's accountants in July. FirstGroup already has acceptances for 31 per cent and its shares rose 34½p to 308p.

Great Western, which operates the Great Western and North Western Trains franchises, has forecast pre-tax profits of not less than £25 million in the year to March 31. The routes acquired include London Paddington to South Wales, the West Country and the Cotswolds and regional services to North Wales, Lancashire, Cumbria and Birmingham.

Shareholders in Great Western will receive 6.7 new shares in FirstGroup and £18.50 in cash for each share they hold. FirstGroup said the acquisition will be "significantly earnings enhancing" under existing accounting policies and is still immediately earnings enhancing if goodwill is amortised over the life of the franchises.

Opraf, the regulator, has secured about £75 million of passenger benefits and investments across the new combined group.

After completion of the deal, Brian Scott, GWH chief executive and Richard George, Great Western managing director, will join the board of FirstGroup. The purchase price is much less than the £200 million first talked about by City analysts but the estimates were struck before taking account of yesterday's £75 million sweeteners. It is expected that seven directors of Great Western will share around £14.8 million.

Analysts expect that Chiltern Railways, Thames and GB Railways (which runs the Anglia franchise out of Liverpool Street) — still part-owned by the management — could be valued in the same way as Great Western if sold to the likes of Stagecoach, National Express or Go-Ahead. Chiltern Railways, which runs the London Marylebone service, is expected to be first to go. It is owned by M40 Trains — a management buyout team backed by 3i, who were also Great Western shareholders.

Commentary, page 29

Rolls denies claim of US link

BY ADAM JONES

ROLLS-ROYCE, the aircraft engine maker, denied yesterday that it has held "substantive" merger talks with Pratt & Whitney, its US rival and occasional partner.

In response to a suggestion that Pratt had wanted a merger but had been thwarted by Rolls's determination to keep control of a merged company, a Rolls-Royce spokesman said that the two groups have talked about the future of the industry but nothing more.

He said: "We have been talking to Pratt about the industry because we work with them on a number of programmes, but there have been no substantive discussions about a merger."

Pratt & Whitney is owned by United Technologies of the US. A Pratt spokesman said: "There have never been merger talks between Pratt & Whitney and Rolls-Royce."

He said Pratt thought it unlikely that any of the three big engine makers — Pratt, Rolls and General Electric of the US — would merge. He added: "Rolls-Royce would not be interested in any kind of merger where it could not be a majority partner." He said partnerships on specific programmes would continue.

RICHARD POHLE



Mike Darrington, left, and Malcolm Simpson, finance director, savour Greggs' results

Greggs rises to challenge

BY MARTIN BARROW

GREGGS, Britain's biggest retail baker, continues to fight off competition from superstores. In 1997 the company, which owns the Baker's Oven chain, exceeded its own expectations with pre-tax profits that rose 15.1 per cent to £18 million.

The company enjoyed a seasonal boost from the weather during the course of the year, with a mild winter contributing to strong trading over Christmas. The high street boom in mid-1997 also helped. Group sales grew 11.5 per cent to £265.9 million. Growth in sales of takeaway sandwiches and savouries continued to outpace bread and rolls.

Mike Darrington, managing director, said: "As a 'daily purchase' retailer we are vulnerable to climatic extremes that affect people's willingness to venture out to the shops or to consume bakery products. Overall, the weather in 1997 was better than average for our sort of business. Only the very hot spell in August presented us with any serious difficulties."

The total dividend rises to 37p (32p), with a 26p final, payable from earnings per share of 121.1p (95.8p). The shares rose 85p to £21.

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Merger report helps to lift Zeneca

BY CARL MORTISHED
INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR

SHARES in Zeneca gained more than 1 per cent yesterday after the pharmaceuticals group was named as a potential merger partner by the head of Astra, a Swedish rival.

The comments made by Hakan Mogren, Astra's chief executive, in a Swedish newspaper, were later played down by a company spokesman who said that mergers were simply one of a number of options.

Mr Mogren cited Zeneca, Bayer and Schering-Plough, as potential partners. Having described Zeneca as a fine company, he said: "It would be wrong to say we have never spoken to them."

Zeneca, whose shares rose 33p to 2,648p on the news yesterday, said it had received no bid or merger approaches. The share price has been buoyed by bid speculation for more than a year after a spate of big mergers in the pharmaceuticals industry.

According to Mr Mogren, Astra's slowing pace of growth makes a merger more attractive. The loss of patent protection on its most valuable drug, Losec, an anti-ulcer drug, has been a cause for concern.

A top seller, Losec accounts for 45 per cent of sales. Its patent could end in 2001, although the company may be able to obtain extensions.

Astra is keen to find a European, rather than American, partner. It has a joint venture with Merck to distribute its products in the US and would therefore find little synergy with a US drug company.

City analysts yesterday speculated that the Astra-Merck venture might be a stumbling block to other deals. Jo Walton, analyst at Lehman Bros., said: "New products have to be offered to the venture. If you do a deal with Astra, you might have to hand your drugs over to Astra-Merck."

Valued at some $40 billion (£25 billion), Astra is of a similar size to Zeneca, Bayer and Schering-Plough. The City reckons any deal would need to be an agreed merger rather than a hostile bid.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Healthcall directors consider response

EXECUTIVE directors of Healthcall Group who want to buy out their medical services company are considering their next move after America' Transworld Healthcare Inc indicated it was prepared to trump their offer. Transworld is considering making a 105p a share cash offer, valuing Healthcall at around £57 million. Last month Healthcall executives, acting through their buyout vehicle, HCMS, said they were ready to offer 90p a share. The shares rose 14½p to 102½p yesterday.

Independent directors, who are being advised by Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, have urged shareholders to take no action. Healthcall, which specialises in handling night calls on behalf of general practitioners, came to the stock market in 1994 valued at £58 million, against original estimates of £70 million. The shares fell sharply in 1996 after an unexpected fall in interim profits.

US blow for T&N bidder

FEDERAL-MOGUL has been forced to agree to sell the bulk of the bearings business of T&N to secure the agreement of US regulators to its £1.5 billion, 260p a share, offer for the UK automotive components group. Federal-Mogul will sell some 70 per cent of the T&N bearings businesses, one of its core attractions. The American bidder has agreed with the Federal Trade Commission to divest T&N's worldwide thinwall and metal-backed polymer dry bearings business, with estimated sales of £230 million, compared with total bearing sales of £330 million.

Kiam role confirmed

VICTOR KIAM was confirmed as the new part-time chairman of Ronson, the troubled cigarette lighter maker, yesterday. His company, RPI Corporation, is to take a 10 per cent stake in Ronson as part of a refinancing that sees Ronson raise £6 million from shareholders, mainly through a rights issue. Two months ago Ronson shocked the stock market when it said losses for 1997 would be more than £7 million. Albion Consortium Fund, which owns 17 per cent of Ronson, is providing a guarantee to the group's bankers.

Avocet warning

AVOCET MINING, the tungsten and gold producer, gave warning yesterday that profits would be depressed by lower than expected gold production and weak tungsten prices. The mining company is planning an £18 million rights issue, underwritten by Elliott Associates, a major shareholder, as a means of raising further working capital. Avocet Mining said that gold production at its Penjom mine in Malaysia would be 10,000 ozs lower than the 75,000 ounces predicted at the interim results in December.

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells		Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia $	2.54	2.37	Malta	0.686	0.627
Austria Sch	22.10	20.44	Netherlds Gld	3.565	3.270
Belgium Fr	64.94	59.98	New Zealand $	2.98	2.74
Canada $	2.447	2.259	Norway Kr	13.05	12.11
Cyprus Cyp£	0.919	0.847	Portugal Esc	318.77	296.74
Denmark Kr	12.00	11.11	S Africa Rd	8.85	7.99
Finland Mkk	9.63	8.88	Spain Pta	265.30	246.51
France Fr	10.61	9.79	Sweden Kr	13.99	12.89
Germany Dm	3.16	2.92	Switzerland Fr	2.59	2.37
Greece Dr	500	461	Turkey Lira	388888	388888
Hong Kong $	13.50	12.50	USA $	1.743	1.600
Iceland	132	112			
Ireland Pt	1.26	1.17			
Israel Shk	6.28	5.81			
Italy Lira	3120	2883			
Japan Yen	224.09	206.58			

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THE SUNDAY TIMES

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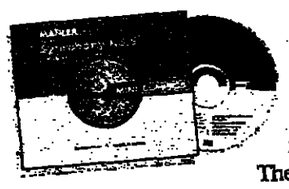
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CHANGING TIMES

Not a good career move

COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

In popular culture, Geoffrey Robinson has become the personification of the offshore trust beneficiary. As Gordon Brown launched his pre-emptive strike on offshore tax avoiders, it was the name of Robinson which sprang into commentators' minds.

If this is uncomfortable for the Paymaster General, it is probably even more embarrassing for some of his colleagues in the Government. Months after his interest in the Orion Trust was first disclosed, the scale of his overseas' fortune remains a mystery. We know that Orion holds shares valued at about £12.5 million but Robinson has declined to comment on what other assets might be shielded by the anonymity of a Guernsey address.

Yet his wealth, and its tax efficient handling, cannot be the only reason why his colleagues should be concerned about Mr Robinson's financial affairs. The Paymaster General was originally paraded as a man who would bring valuable business experience to the operations of government, someone who would know how to take the laudable idea of the Private Finance Initiative and make it work.

How does this square with the facts of Mr Robinson's time in business? Accountants Coopers & Lybrand hardly echoed the Government's enthusiasm for Mr Robinson's corporate achievements. When he was chairman of Hollis Industries, an engineering business, it managed to lose £12 million in an 18-month period. The accountants found that the records of income and expenditure were so scrappy that they could not carry out a proper audit. Nonetheless, it was clear that Mr Robinson had been paid £200,000 for his non-executive role overseeing this mess.

In 1991, the company collapsed into administration, but the deficit at Hollis need not have been fatal because the company was kept afloat by Pergamon, the company made famous by Robert Maxwell. Indeed, the ultimate holding company of Hollis was the Maxwell Foundation, happily ensconced in secrecy-loving Lichtenstein.

The enthusiasm for secrecy obviously rubbed off on Robinson. It is increasingly clear that he chose to give the House of Commons register of members' interests little indication of the scale of his business interests, being particularly sparing in mention of his involvement with Maxwell companies.

The inquiries that are now going on into Robinson's apparent failure to comply with House of Commons requirements will have to dig deep into Companies House to trace the intricate network of companies with which he was involved. But unlike so many who were swept up into the Maxwell empire by the acquisitive tactics of the former Mirror Group publisher, Robinson cannot claim that he landed there by accident.

While offshore trusts may be embarrassing, being so closely involved with parts of the Maxwell empire which threatened pensioners with undeserved poverty could be career breaking.

It's goodbye from them again

The Tax-Dodger General will doubtless take any fiscal medicine the Chancellor dishes out to offshore trusts — pending professional advice. Others affected should probably do the same, but many will not.

Famous faces will again slip abroad, taking much of the entertainment business and the development of inventions with them. Any meaningful crackdown on offshore trusts and offshore investment will create a new generation of the tax exiles that have always formed a dumb chorus commentating on each Labour government.

But tax on income, as on capital gains, is not excessively penal in Britain, except for poor people. The offshore industry built up when things were very different. For decades, taxation was little short of confiscation.

The offshore appeal has been sustained because politicians still do not have the guts to admit that big inheritances are a natural consequence of the ever-widening spread of wealth, rather than the divisive class privilege of a few feudal landowners. Those with money fear that governments will want to get their hands on the loot, so feel safer with it offshore, even when the obvious benefits are limited.

But any avoidance, including the merely prospective, is anathema to Chancellor Gordon Brown. He had warned of his intention to clamp down and yesterday he showed that he means business.

His warning had naturally been greeted as a challenge by the country's leading accountants, who have been preparing for a bumper Finance Bill. They advised their personal clients to plan now against anything from heavy taxes on family gifts to fiscal gunboats being despatched to terrorise Europe's more attractive smaller islands.

Evidently, their advice was being heeded. UK residents have been leaping through a nifty loophole that allows them to realise gains in offshore trusts tax free. This was not the intention of tax laws. The Treasury is right to act at the first opportunity to stop the loophole fast. As Kenneth Clarke finally conceded on the share buyback loophole, there is no point waiting for Budget day. No such drama would be necessary, and no tax would have been lost, if the Chancellor had let sleeping dogs lie. The appeal of offshore funds is that they roll up returns tax free. That is what should happen in Britain regardless of whether the proceeds are taxed when taken out and spent.

Prescott gets rail bosses he deserves

Let's get one thing straight about rail privatisation. The public was ripped off because the Labour Opposition was so vehemently hostile to the enterprise. Shadow ministers breathed fire about the vengeance they would wreak, but bottled out when they had the chance to scupper the sale of Railtrack, the key to the process, shortly before the election.

As John Prescott well knows, the go-ahead for Railtrack's sale was, by default, one of the first executive decisions of the Labour Shadow Cabinet. This negative stance slashed the prices at which assets were sold and ensured that few big domestic companies, other than those with experience of bus privatisation, took any interest in franchises. He inherited the consequences.

In office, Mr Prescott has stuck with easy populism over undeserved rewards garnered by British Rail managers who took the chance to buy their own jobs. Not surprisingly, performance has often been no better than in the bad old days when the same people ran the show. It was OK when they earned a pittance.

The franchise director has been practical, winning £75 million promises of extra investment across three franchises and imposing slightly stiffer incentives to stop trains being quite so late. It does not sound the toughest of negotiations. But he has done better than the politicians. They should know by now that keeping railways in the pillory, however well merited, will guarantee the failure of any drive to switch traffic to the rails.

What a Liberty

THE pantomime at Liberty continues to entertain, though for shareholders a £10 million bill for abandoning a grandiose redevelopment scheme is far from funny. But there is surely a sense of humour behind the new recruits to the upmarket store: two former Tesco directors and a chief executive skilled in selling sanitary products. Is this what Elizabeth Stewart-Liberty had in mind when she backed Brian Myerson's seige of the company?

Early report from Courts dispels gloom

BY GEORGE SIVELL

COURTS, the international furnishings group, has been forced to make an optimistic trading statement covering the year to March 31 after warnings from DFS, MFI and Carpetright this week.

Courts yesterday revealed a like-for-like increase of 13.9 per cent during its October to December third quarter, a 38.8 per cent rise on comparable sales in January and a 28.6 per cent rise for the January and February period.

The shares responded to the early statement with a 35p rise to 375p, although the price is still well down on the high of 614p reached last August before the Asian economic crisis.

Advisers to Courts believed that the market was in danger of drawing its own, and the wrong, conclusions from the gloom that emerged from the carpet and furniture industry on Wednesday.

The group has substantial retail operations in the Caribbean and the Far East. Courts said that trading volumes in Asia are ahead of those seen in the previous year but it would have to wait until March 31 to see at what rate it will be able to translate local figures into sterling. Caribbean trading has continued to be good in the second half of the year, said Courts, although it was still too early to comment on results for the year as a whole.

Bruce Cohen, chief executive of Courts and a member of the Cohen family that controls 20 per cent of the shares, believes that bigger stores selling a wider range of furniture, carpets, upholstery and electricals explain why the company has fared better than MFI, DFS and Carpetright.

Courts has also benefited from adverts featuring Bruce Forsyth, the game-show host, aimed at middle-market customers.

Shares in MFI fell a further 2½p to a low of 95½p yesterday, although DFS improved 6p to 445p. Carpetright recovered 12p to 426p.

In the Hot Seat, page 30
Tempus, page 31

Royal & Sun pays £53m for NU unit

BY MARIANNCE CURPHEY

NORWICH UNION has sold its New Zealand life insurance and investment management divisions to Royal & Sun Alliance for £53.7 million and bought the non-standard personal insurance business of the St Paul group in Britain.

The disposal of part of NU's New Zealand interests led analysts to speculate that further restructuring in the region was likely, particularly in Australia which is regarded as one of NU's weaker businesses. "NU runs an old-fashioned operation Down Under and it is being left behind by the likes of AMP," according to one analyst.

NU is expected to report full-year results in the range of £610 million to £640 million on Tuesday. RSA said it planned to consolidate the operations of both companies under the Royal & Sun Alliance name. At its annual results presentation on Thursday RSA announced that it intended to grow its business outside the UK by acquisition.

Investment trusts attack critics

BY GAVIN LUMSDEN

LEADING players in the £60 billion investment trust industry regrouped and attacked their critics yesterday.

Supporters of investment trusts have been rocked in a week that has seen four trusts with £447 million of assets bow to shareholder pressure and announce plans to liquidate and hand back cash to investors. A further seven, worth £505 million, are in the middle of reconstructions.

The activity has been caused by a small group of American arbitrageurs and UK vulture funds such as Advance UK Trust that have exploited the widening discounts of investment trust shares. Michael Hart, director-general of the Association of Investment Trust Companies, attacked the "quick buck brigade" for threatening to destroy the industry. "There is a danger that the investment trust industry will get smaller and smaller and will lose critical mass."

Tempus, page 31

BT prepares to launch interactive products

BT plans to launch a telephone with a screen that can be used for home banking and home shopping this autumn (Raymond Snoddy writes).

Users will be able to tap a personal number into a keypad to gain access to bank statements or order shopping. BT has begun talks with banks and high street retailers.

The new phone, called the Easy Phone, is reminiscent of other former BT products that successful Minitel in France. Rupert Gavin, who is in charge of all BT's new interactive products, said yesterday that the key to success would be price. The Easy Phone would cost less than £150, but users would be able to send and receive e-mail using their telephone screen.

Work is also advanced on another more sophisticated version — a Web Phone. The Web Phone will enable users to browse the Web — as well

ANNOUNCEMENT

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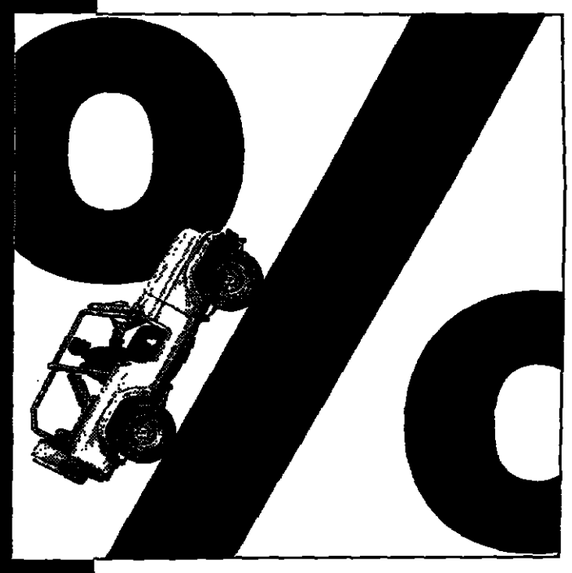
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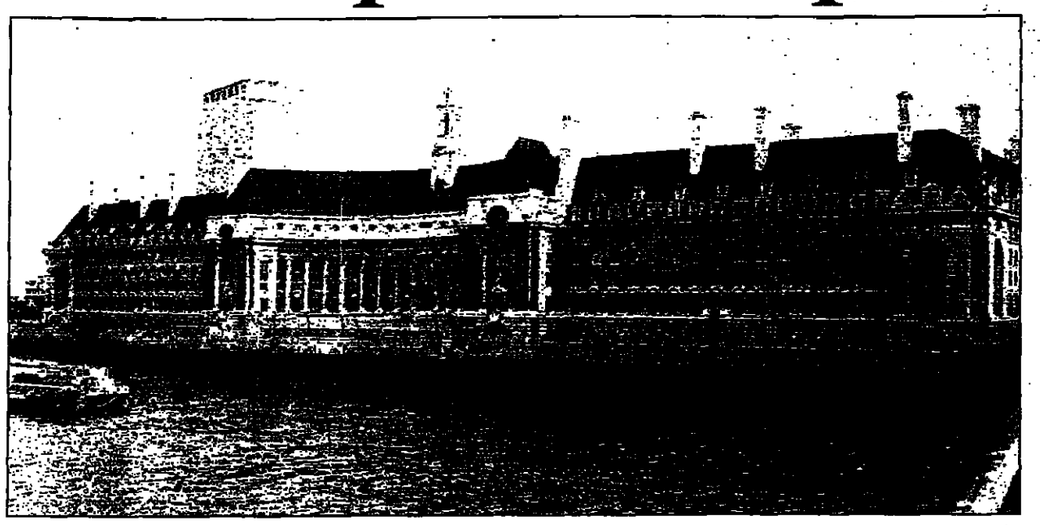
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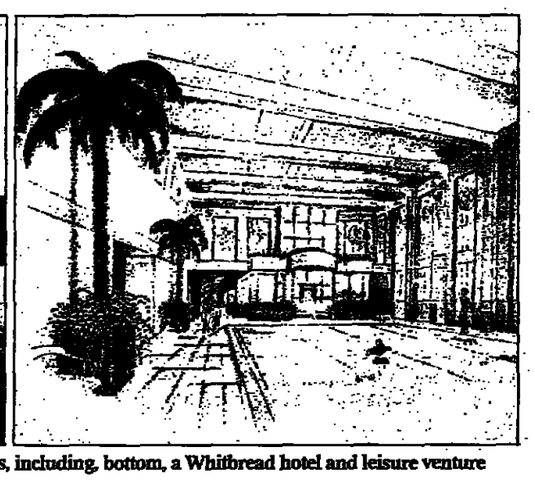
Legal & General

Long fight turns corridors of power into palace of pleasure

A family firm from Japan is transforming County Hall, Dominic Walsh reports







County Hall, top, the GLC's old home, now has new roles, including, bottom, a Whitbread hotel and leisure venture

Given the political and planning storms that have dogged County Hall since Mac Okamoto first tried to buy it ten years ago. He remains remarkably sanguine. Indeed, not only has he retained his enthusiasm for turning the Greater London Council's former home into a multi-faceted leisure attraction, but he is looking to embark on a similar venture in Paris.

The building he is negotiating to buy in Paris is, like County Hall, a publicly owned landmark. His refusal to identify it is a clear sign that dealing with French political sensitivities is every bit as delicate as the task that he has faced in London. He is nevertheless convinced that the Parisian authorities can be won over. "We have secured a site, which is very central," he said. "What we want to do is similar to what we have here, a new generation of family entertainment centre. We're dealing with the City of Paris, who are very impressed with what we've done", in London.

Mr Okamoto's expansive plans are all the more remarkable given the woes afflicting many other Japanese companies after Asia's economic crisis. The difference with Shirayama Shokusan, the property-based company whose interests he looks after in Europe, is that it is still family owned. Despite the collapse of Japan's property market, Mr Okamoto reckons that the company is still worth more than £1 billion because Takashi Shirayama, the current family head, had spotted the warning signals. "He realised it was getting too overheated and sold off a lot of property before the collapse," Mr Okamoto says.

Selling County Hall, however, is not on the agenda, particularly as there is still a long way to go before it is fully let. Even after all the current projects are up and running, around 60 per cent of the 1.5 million sq ft building will be empty, although Mr Okamoto is in the final stages of negotiating a deal that would fill another 250,000 sq ft. He declines to give specifics, but says: "It's something to do with music, which is the one thing missing. It will be an interactive attraction that will be done through some sort of joint venture with a very eminent international company."

In spite of huge scepticism in the development's early stages, the tenants that have signed up include big names such as Namco, the Japanese amusement centres group, Whitbread, McDonald's and the World of Football Hall of Fame, chaired by Geoff Hurst, the England World Cup hero, and backed by Lord Hollick's United News & Media. Mr Okamoto has also handed 6,000 sq ft of office space rent-free to the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund. His offer of a home for the proposed mayor of London, incorporating the council chamber where Ken Livingstone held sway, has been declined.

For Whitbread, which has secured a 75-year lease on a turnover-related rent, County Hall is its biggest single retail investment, at £35 million. Last month it opened a 313-bedroom Travel Inn charging just £49 a room and this summer it will open a £20 million Marriott hotel and a luxury health spa costing £4 million.

Many of the Marriott Hotel's 200 bedrooms will have balconies overlooking the Thames and the Houses of Parliament, and Michael O'Dwyer, the general manager, can scarcely contain his excitement at the hotel's prospects. "It's a once-in-a-lifetime project," he said. "The potential of the place is staggering. We'll be showing a 14 per cent-plus return on our investment, and, given a fair wind, it will come in very quickly."

Mr Okamoto is adamant that County Hall will not accept just any tenant. "A lot of people come to us with ideas for multiplex cinemas and the like, but we want to create something very new here," he said. For example, the children's entertainment centre — a facility insisted on by Lambeth council — will feature holographic representations of classic moments in history, such as Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg address and Henry V's Agincourt speech as penned by William Shakespeare. Mr Okamoto has also been keen to ensure that the project, despite its size, attracted more than just the biggest investors. The Chinese restaurant and a soon-to-open Italian restaurant will be run by local entrepreneurs.

Mr Okamoto is also optimistic about the potential of the London Aquarium, opened with little fanfare a year ago under the aegis of Shirayama itself. In spite of unsubtle gibes about sharks in the Shirayama boardroom, the company is planning to increase the aquarium's space, adding more tanks and new experiences.

All this must have seemed a pipedream when Mr Okamoto became involved in the first public tender for County Hall in 1988, two years after abolition of the Greater London Council. At that time, Shirayama was just one of more than a dozen companies in a consortium with grandiose plans for a hugely expensive luxury hotel scheme. Even at that early stage, the process became bogged down in bureaucracy, as the London Residuary Body (LRB), set up by the Government to dispose of the site, tried to find a developer to take on both the main buildings comprising County Hall. As it turned out, Lambeth council refused to give planning consent, and, although an amended scheme was eventually approved, the property slump put paid to the consortium's brief existence.

Undeterred, Shirayama returned to the fray alone, bidding £60 million for only Ralph Knott's main building. The other building was subsequently farmed out to a property group for redevelopment as apartments. Despite a rival bid for the entire site by the London School of Economics, Shirayama won a conditional contract in spring of 1992, although the LRB refused to commit itself until after the general election. This let supporters of the LSE scheme lobby right up to Cabinet level, although the Treasury eventually stamped on the idea after working out that moving the LSE to County Hall would cost the nation £80 million. There were also fears that snubbing Shirayama would deter future investment from Japan.

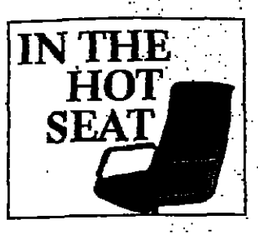
As it turned out, Shirayama felt that its ability to raise finance for the project had been damaged by the LSE dispute, and told Michael Howard, Environment Secretary at the time, that it wanted to renegotiate the terms. "We were very much discredited by the LSE campaign," claims Mr Okamoto. "Bankers don't like these political scandals." A less charitable explanation would be that the company used its position as the sole remaining bidder (no doubt prompted by the economic downturn in Japan) to try to force the price down. Whatever the reasons, it certainly worked and the Government agreed to return to the bargaining table, although to save face — a sentiment that the Japanese would have appreciated — it was eventually agreed that the headline price would stay at £60 million, with £10 million deferred until 2012. By October 1993, County Hall's new owners had moved in.

Cynics were unsurprised when, having moved the goalposts once, Mr Okamoto decided to do so again; citing the collapse of the hotel market as the principal factor in his desire to change the plans. In the event, the authorities agreed to remove the condition that the whole building should become a hotel and conference centre, and so the concept of a family leisure emporium was born.

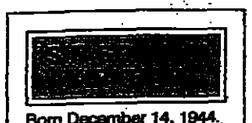
Even so, Mr Okamoto has retained his ability to court controversy, not least when he agreed terms with Richard Branson that would have seen Virgin manage the hotel part of the development. "Unfortunately we differed in our views," he says. "Our view is that a joint venture means financial risk being shared 50-50. Virgin wanted us to pay for everything!"

The severing of the Branson link prompted sceptics to whip up suggestions that Ralph Knott's masterpiece could become another Battersea Power Station. However, with the building now 40 per cent let, Mr Okamoto is adamant that his company's target of a 10 per cent return on investment could be achieved within the next two years. For those who refuse to see the light, Mr Okamoto points to the motto he has had painted on the wall behind his desk at County Hall: "You can see the new world only when you close your mouth and eyes." Politicians would never have understood.

Uncomfortable week for king of the sofas



IN THE HOT SEAT



Born December 14, 1944.
1960: Leaves Maltby Grammar School.
1968: Sets up business on his own.
1983: Buys DFS from receivers.
1993: Stock Exchange float.
1996: Knighted for his charitable works.
1997: Deputy Treasurer, Tory party.

Sir Graham Kirkham might have stepped out of another age. Not because his blunt manner, hyperactive style, Yorkshire accent and habitual wisecracks set him apart from the sleek-suited marketing men who dominate business today, but because he is a high profile retailer and the figurehead for the chain he runs.

Once such beasts grazed happily across the nation's high streets. Sophie Mirman was Sock Shop, Sir Terence Conran personified Habitat, Sir Ralph Halpern did his bit for the Burton publicity machine, and Gerald Ratner provided the nameplate for much of his jewellery chain. But after a great die-back the species is now almost extinct.

Hardly surprising, therefore, that this week's profits upset from DFS Furniture, the sofa chain that grew from the business Kirkham founded almost single-handed 30 years ago, has unnerved the City. What made it worse was a trip by retail analysts to the latest DFS store to open, at Enfield, North London, little more than a week ago.

They somehow formed the impression that trading was going swimmingly. Half-way figures on Wednesday, however, blamed the "Diana effect" for a fall-off that had yet to recover. Full-year profit forecasts were scaled back, and the shares fell by 20 per cent. Part was probably pique. But there was concern that the DFS locomotive might, at the very least, be losing steam.

Kirkham explains that any tip-off would have been forbidden under Stock Exchange rules. "We were in our closed period and couldn't make any sort of financial comment. Our relationship with the City has always been fine," he says. "I would expect any investor not to be happy when the shares go down, but on the stock market you get ups and downs. Nothing's changed — we talk with the figures we deliver."

But for a man with a reputation for plain speaking, he is quite capable of avoiding the question. Pressed on whether he should take responsibility for the City's dissatisfaction, he replies: "I am and always have been a retailer and a marketeer. We rely on the advice of the brokers, merchant bankers and other professionals."

The Kirkham story is an entrepreneurial fairytale. He left school at 16 — "actually, when I was 11 I became a chimney sweep" — with no O levels and went into furniture after having to abandon his dream of joining the RAF. Night school brought business know-how, and at 23 he set up shop in a converted billiard hall and, if you believe the story, former brothel outside Doncaster.

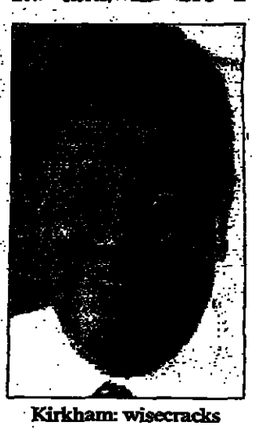
It was, literally, vertical integration — the sofas were made upstairs and sold downstairs. Success brought, after the 1993 stock market float, a fortune in excess of £200 million, a fondness, much indulged, for expensive art, a knighthood and the post of honorary deputy treasurer of the Conservative Party.

There have been upsets on the way. There were accusations two years ago, swiftly disproved, of insider trading, allegedly in cahoots with Lord Harris of Peckham, the carpet king whose career eerily mirrors Kirkham's. There was a row over whether, by means of a £4 million loan to Tory party coffers, he had bought the knighthood.

Of more concern to the City was the decision in 1996 by his two children to sell their 22 per cent stake, neither having any wish to enter the business. Added to earlier share sales, this drove the family holding down to 8 per cent.

Kirkham, a "very, very young 53", and he certainly does not look it, quips that he will keep going until 100. He knows further share sales would be taken very much amiss. The Tory party job is not time-consuming, he says, and while he has extensive charitable interests, the reason for the knighthood, he holds no other directorships.

The doubters wonder where growth will come from in future. The interest-free credit DFS helped to pioneer is standard. While Kirkham promises like-for-like sales growth, it is clear most of the expansion must come from new stores, and DFS is pledged to open about five a year. There are 45 now, and Kirkham himself sets a top limit of 100 in the UK — "we're very, very concerned about cannibalisation, and we don't want stores stealing business from each other." There will, too, be no diversification from the core business of selling upholstered furniture.



Kirkham: wisecracks

This "small cottage industry", as he calls it, has made a fortune which must have been unimaginable to the miner's son when he started out, although he jokes about dreaming of being a billionaire. That is, one assumes he is joking. And he remains unrepentant at the latest bust-up with the City. "In a way, this demonstrates that we are human."

MARTIN WALLER



Just William

WILLIAM WALDEGRAVE. You remember him. Curly-haired toff, wife does a bit of cooking. Didn't like being called Wal-de-grave, had to be pronounced Wuh-de-Gruh, or something like that. Anyway, he's landed. He is joining Dresdner Kleinwort Benson with a full-time and doubtless remunerative job as director in corporate finance.

I scan his CV for signs of expertise in banking. Eton, Corpus Christi, Oxford. Fellow of All Souls, so if he's that bright, why didn't he see the election defeat coming? Cabinet Office, Central Policy Review Staff, no, not a proper job among them.

Hang on, he was Arnie Weinstock's personal assistant for six years, does that count? Then Environment, then the Treasury, and then May 1, 1997, when the voters of Bristol West said thank you, you can go now. He is also a director of the Bristol and West, whose members, presumably, didn't get the vote.

A colleague recalls seeing him not long ago on the Tube. He is also a beef farmer. Perhaps he needs the money.

☐ *THERE is a sort of weary inevitability to this. Not only has the Inland Revenue found the time to process eight million self-assessment forms and post 670,000 penalty notices. The zealous inspectors also sent fines for £0.00 to two clients of the Price Waterhouse Hull office and a repayment of £0.01 to a London client.*

Raine over

ANOTHER top BZW man ejects from Canary Wharf after the CSFB takeover and swims upriver again. Except that the departure of Henry Raine, in charge of compliance at BZW's global investment banking business, seems to have been amicable. He is rejoining the ranks of the lawyers as a partner in corporate finance at Herbert Smith. "It's not baling out of CSFB, it's a change of career," he says. "It seemed a good time to move back into the profession." As part of this outbreak of goodwill and because there is no apparent conflict of interest, Raine will stay at CSFB until his move in the early summer, so no long, lazy gardening leave for him. Hard luck.

☐ *A CHANGE of life, too, for Charlie Garside, the man who had his moment of fame when almost singlehanded he kept* The European *afloat, as it were, after the death of Robert Maxwell. Garside, a former employee of this paper, used his own company to keep things going until the Barclay Brothers arrived to save the day. Now he is joining his former proprietors in the hotel business. He is buying Miller Howe, Windermere, an Edwardian mansion hotel in the Lake District. A promising start; but it could be a while before Garside becomes a rival for the Barclays' Ritz and Howard Hotels.*



Archie's list

IT SEEMS Archie Norman was genuinely shocked at the state of the Conservative Party when he arrived to put things right after the election. He was "surprised at the state of disrepair of the party," he says in an interview with *Real Business*. "It is like a great ship foundering, but up on the bridge not everyone is aware of the danger."

As an indication of the state of party unity, Central Office could not even get its hands on a proper membership list. The 650 constituency organisations refused outright, and 39 of them would have nothing to do with a subsequent poll either. Norman concludes, apparently without a trace of irony, that the Party needs "re-creating and re-engineering" and that it has "culturally stood still". Archie, why do you think they call it the Conservative Party?

MARTIN WALLER

STOCK MARKET MICHAEL CLARK



Stock Market Writer of the Year

Drugs sector recovers as bid speculation mounts

DRUG and financial shares may have been under the hammer for most of this week, but they were back on investors' shopping lists yesterday as the *market sensed that* more corporate deals may be in the pipeline.

SmithKline Beecham led the drug shares higher with the price adding 28p at 808p amid mounting speculation that it *may* soon face an aggressive bid after dropping *out of merger talks* with **Glaxo Wellcome**, up 34p at £16.56. But early speculation focused on **Zeneca**, up 33p at £26.48, after comments in a Swedish newspaper by the *Astra chief* executive indicating that he *may be looking to bid.*

Haakan Mogren said Astra was stepping up its efforts to find a merger partner. Astra had talked to Zeneca but said there were plenty of alternatives. City speculators claim *that SmithKline*, with a price tag of £25 billion, might make a better partner for the Swedes. Deutsche Morgan Grenfell is reckoned to have whetted investors appetites late on Thursday by setting a target price of £11 a share.

The strong performance by Asian markets overnight lifted **HSBC** 46p to £18.54 and **Standard Chartered** 18p to 856p. *Other banks rebounded* after a difficult couple of days following a revival of speculative claims. **Abbey National** jumped 27p to £11.75, **Bank of Scotland** 28p to 660p, **Halifax** 14p to 937p, **Lloyds TSB** 29p to 909p, **NatWest** 27p to £10.80 and **Royal Bank of Scotland** 18p to 903p.

Norwich Union touched 521p before ending just 3p *better at 498p on revived bid* talk. **Schroders** was the best performer among the top 100 companies, leaping 140p to £23.70 on claims it could soon *find itself on the receiving end* of bid from Morgan Stanley, *the US securities house.*

Also being chased higher in financials were **Prudential**, 28½p to 898½p; **Amvescap**, 27p to 615p; and **Legal & General**, 29p to 665p.

The rest of the equity market closed just below its best of the day, supported by strong opening gains for both equities and bonds on Wall Street, despite stronger than expected *non-farm payroll numbers.*

Turnover was bolstered by a computerised "buy" programme. Total turnover reached 989 million shares. The FTSE 100 index closed up 87.3 points at 5,782.9, stretching the lead on the week to 15.6.

Vodafone shrugged off this week's referral of mobile-phone charges to the Monopolies *and Mergers Commission* with a rise of 23½p at 539½p. Dresdner Kleinwort Benson and HSBC are both recommending the shares to clients.

Next recovered from weakness with a rise of 41p at 753p as Morgan Stanley continued to recommend the shares.

Argos, meanwhile, slipped *3p to 606p as Dresdner* Kleinwort Benson, the broker, urged clients to sell. The broker says the 570p a share offer from **Great Universal Stores**, up *8p at 797p*, offers shareholders the opportunity to "get out of jail free". It reckons there is little chance of a white knight emerging and if the bid is referred the price could drop back to 500p.

Overnight reports that Pratt & Whitney, the US engine maker, wanted to bid lifted **Rolls-Royce** 15¼p to 267¾p in *heavy turnover of 17.36 million* shares. The company is still protected from unwanted bids by a golden share.

First Group, up 34½p at 308p, *got the thumbs-up from* the City for its plan to buy Great Western Railways for £105 million. The deal has already received the blessing *of the industry regulator.*

Enterprise Oil, which reported a drop in profits earlier this week, fell 9p to 570p after Salomon Brothers, the US securities house, urged clients to "sell". **Reckitt & Colman** was another weak market, losing 28p at £10.60 as SBC Warburg, the broker, lowered its recommendation on the *shares from "hold" to "reduce"* ahead of results next week.

Quilligotti was an early casualty, dropping 6½p, or 27.6 per cent, to 17p after issuing a profits warning and announcing the resignation of *David Scott, the chairman.*

Shield Diagnostics stood *out with a leap of 60p at 675p.* Colin Blackbourn, broker at Shore Capital and the man behind the recent surge in shares of Tadpole Technology, said: "We think Shield has significant upside potential in *the long term and could* become the leader in cardio-*vascular diagnostics.*"

Meanwhile, **Tadpole Technology** added 5½p at 33p. Last month the price of the hand-held computer group surged from 8p to 62p in just a few days. Expect further develop-*ments next* week.

Aim-listed **Independent Energy** held steady at 240p despite reporting reduced losses last year of £464,000, against £597,000 last time.

The bid from GE Capital, *the venture capitalist, lifted* **Barcom** 19½p to 68½p. GE is offering 72p a share, valuing the fleet manager at £41.1 million.

Healthcall *rose 13½p to* 101½p on plans by the American company Transworld Healthcare to offer 105p a share, which would top an offer of 90p a share already on the table from HCMS, a *managment buyout venture.*

☐ **GILT-EDGED:** Bonds recovered early falls and went on to claw back some of this week's losses despite the stronger than expected US non-farm payroll numbers.

In the futures pit, the June series of the long gilt rose five ticks to £107⁵/₃₂ as the total number of contracts completed reached 81,000. The five-*year future finished* 0.08 higher at £102.30 with 1,684 *contracts were traded. In con*ventional issues, Treasury 8 per cent 2021 rose £½ to £124²⁹/₃₂, while among shorter-dated issues, Treasury 7 per cent 2002 was a tick firmer at £102⅝.

☐ **NEW YORK:** Shares on Wall Street pressed higher at midday as technology stocks staged a snap-back rally, unfazed by the second earnings warning in two days from a major company or a stronger than expected February employment report. The Dow Jones industrial average was up 72.99 points at 8,517.32.



John Sulley, commercial director, and Burt Keenan, the chairman, saw Independent Energy cut losses by £133,000

Profit-taking left Safeway, Britain's fourth largest supermarket chain, 12½p lower, at 374½p, in heavy turnover of 3.3 million shares. Fresh talk about merger talks with Asda have been played down but the shares are up 16½p on the week — not bad ***for a company with three profit warnings to its name.***

MOVERS OF THE WEEK

	Current price	Week's change	
Safeway	374½p	+16½p	Bid speculation
Energy Group	840p	+62p	Bid battle develops
Delphi Group	700p	-105p	Results disappoint
Barclays Bank	£17.70	-34p	Profit taking
Carpetright	426p	-52½p	Trading statement
DFS Furniture	445p	-125p	Profits warning
Securicor	346p	-19½p	Mobile phones referred
Faber Prest	494p	+34p	Heckett MultiServe bids
Barcom	68½p	+19½p	GE Capital bids 72p

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):	
Dow Jones	8517.32 (+72.99)
S&P Composite	1049.08 (+14.03)
Tokyo:	
Nikkei Average	17131.97 (-283.42)
Hong Kong:	
Hang Seng	10919.53 (+115.85)
Amsterdam:	
AEX Index	1088.90 (+28.26)
Sydney:	
AO	2667.6 (+14.5)
Frankfurt:	
DAX	4715.95 (+92.55)
Singapore:	
Straits	1571.1 (-8.53)
Brussels:	
General	16183.44 (+258.97)
Paris:	
CAC-40	3483.22 (+87.43)
Zurich:	
SKA Gen	1436.10 (+28.30)
London:	
FT 30	3651.4 (+44.0)
FTSE 100	5782.9 (+87.3)
FTSE 250	5250.6 (+22.8)
FTSE 350	2767.4 (+36.3)
FTSE Eurotop 100	2624.05 (+50.75)
FTSE All-Share	2694.76 (+33.67)
FTSE Non Financials	2665.00 (+25.71)
FTSE Fixed Interest	139.76 (+0.39)
FTSE Govt Secs	103.43 (+0.27)
Bargains	67192
SEAQ Volume	959.7m
US$	1.6372 (+0.0045)
German Mark	2.9995 (-0.0005)
Exchange Index	105.4 (-0.2)
Bank of England official close (4pm)	
£:ECU	1.5153
£:SDR	1.2225
RPI	159.5 Jan (3.3%) Jan 1987=100
RPIX	157.7 Jan (2.5%) Jan 1987=100

RECENT ISSUES

Athlone Extrusions	85½	...
BGR	230	+ 10
Bass B	95½	- ½
Diageo B	515½	...
Eurotunnel 01/03 Wts	7	- 3
Monsoon	194	- ½
Quadrant Hlthcre	129½	...
Sanctuary Warrants	4½	...

RIGHTS ISSUES

Wates City n/p (94)	100	...

MAJOR CHANGES

RISES:	
First Gp	308p (+34½p)
Courts Furnish	375p (+35p)
Gld Fields Prop	135 (+12p)
Shield Diag	675p (+60p)
Laing (J)	337p (+19p)
Next	753p (+41p)
Jarvis	596p (+29p)
DCS Gp	491p (+22p)
AMVESCAP	615p (+27p)
Legal & Gen	665p (+29p)
Bank Scotland	660p (+28p)
Williams	368p (+13p)
Smithkline	808p (+28p)
Broken Hill	631p (+20½p)
Lloyds TSB	909p (+29p)
Dalgety	338p (+10p)
Marks Spencer	570p (+16½p)
Unilever	570p (+14p)
Carpetright	426p (+12p)
Airtours	480p (+12p)
FALLS:	
Filtronic	526p (-31½p)
Br Land	740p (-20p)
JBA Hldgs	660p (-17½p)
Molins	305p (-7½p)
HIT Enterprise	405p (-10p)
Helphire Gp	410p (-10p)
Vitec	584p (-13½p)
Capital Radio	633p (-11p)
Natl Express	779p (-13½p)
Smiths Inds	900p (-15p)
Enterprise	570p (-9p)
RMC Gp	985p (-15p)
Cairn Energy	404½p (-10p)
Allied Domecq	562p (-8p)

Closing Prices Page 26

TEMPUS

Trusts feeling the heat

IF MICHAEL FOSTER, the Labour MP trying to ban fox hunting, wants to protect poor, dumb innocent creatures, he should take a look towards the City. Here the latest bloodsport among institutions is to hire a few arbitrageurs and vulture funds to wheel around dozy investment trusts boards pecking them to pieces.

Very good at it they are too. Up to 11 trusts have already been forced to liquidate and/or turn themselves into a unit trust. This could see nearly £1 billion flow from the £60 billion sector. Other victims such as Fleming Fledgeling, Dunedin Worldwide and Anglo Overseas are already in the predators' sights. More could follow, particularly in the international and smaller company sectors *where institutions are trying to reduce their* holdings. The shake-out will be given fresh impetus if the Chancellor removes capital gains tax from sales of long-term investments. This would send weary institutions rushing for the door.

The attack on trusts and the pressure on the discount between their share prices and their asset *values could make trust shares attrac*tive. Although liquidating a trust can be *expensive, investors could benefit from the* elimination of (most of) the discount.

However, not all trusts are vulnerable. Those that have issued debentures are less susceptible to the arbs, because these securities are costly to buy back on reconstruction. Warrants can cause similar problems, because shareholders have to find the money to compensate their holders. Lengthy *management contracts will also add to the bill* and may keep the predators at bay.

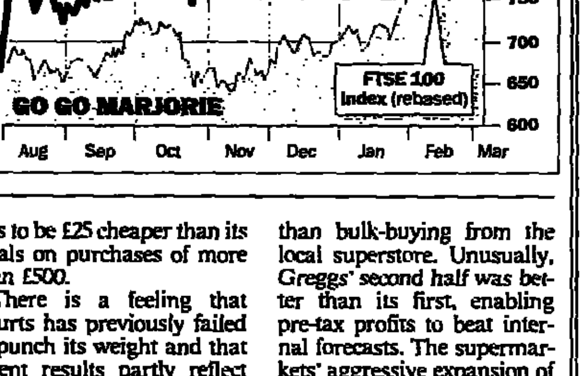
Pearson

MARJORIE SCARDINO, Pearson chief executive, has bitten the bullet and disposed *of one of the more exotic US* turkeys to attract British interest — Software Toolworks, better known as Mindscape. The Learning Company, whose software is sold in 23,000 US outlets, should be able *to do more with it than* Pearson ever managed.

*The latest rise in the Pear*son share price reflects not just the City's pleasure that Mrs Scardino has had the courage to get rid of *Mindscape, but also the $150* million Pearson will receive for it.

No one from the old regime ever admitted responsibility for the original purchase and bonuses con*tinued to flow uninterrupted.* Sir Frank Barlow, the former group managing director, was happy to tell anyone who asked that he had always been against the idea. The main enthusiasts were believed to be Mark Burrell, *a fan of things interactive* and electronic who is now retired, and David Veit, who headed Pearson's interests in America and who is also about to pick up his pension.

Without making any big bang decisions, Mrs Scardino is gradually reshaping Pearsons in a sensible form. With the help of a strong market, she has also *made a good start towards* her target of doubling the value of Pearson (to £13.32 a share) within five years. Maybe it is time to set for her an even more demanding goal.



Courts

*THOSE dreadful Bruce For*syth ads for Courts must be even more successful than was thought when they won the furniture industry's advertising effectiveness award. Either that, or MFI, DFS and *Carpetright are doing some*thing badly wrong.

Trading in Courts' British stores over the past couple of months is wholly at odds *with the experience of its* more specialist rivals, which *all had to issue profits* warnings on Wednesday. Excluding newer stores, Courts enjoyed a 38 per cent surge in sales orders in January, and *a 29 per cent rise over the* two-month winter sale period *to February 28.*

Bruce Cohen, chief executive, puts this down to a simple formula of bigger stores, broader choice and better value. *Courts offers* carpets, curtains and three-*piece suites* — and an interior designer to help customers colour co-ordinate. It promises to be £25 cheaper than its rivals on purchases of more *than £500.*

There is a feeling that Courts has previously failed to punch its weight and that recent results partly reflect an element of catch-up. But continuing such progress *would call into question the* narrow focus of Carpetright and DFS.

Courts' shares fell sharply after last September, reflecting its large *exposure* to South-East Asia, previously *the* largest source of profits. But with solid progress in the Caribbean, the stock still looks reasonable value after yesterday's 35p rise to 375p.

Greggs

FOR once, Greggs can be thankful for the vagaries of the British weather. A benign summer followed by a mild *winter meant customers were* happy to shop with Greggs or its Baker's Oven chain for daily purchases of bread, sandwiches and cakes, rather than bulk-buying from the local superstore. Unusually, *Greggs' second half was bet*ter than its first, enabling pre-tax profits to beat internal forecasts. The supermarkets' aggressive expansion of *their bakeries has again* failed to dent Greggs' record *of sustained earnings* growth.

Underlying sales of bread continues in gentle decline but Greggs scores well with *higher-margin products such* as sandwiches and savouries.

The company has proved adept at cheaply buying ageing local bakeries to bolt on to its existing business. Greggs now has 726 outlets, yet it is *unrepresented in many parts* of the UK. Despite record capital expenditure of £24.4 million, it still has £8.6 million of cash for expansion.

Up another 85p to £21 yesterday, prolonging a rise *from £16.32 a year ago, the* shares may yet have further to go.

EDITED BY PAUL DURMAN

COMMODITIES

LIFFE

COCOA

Mar	unq	May	unq
May	1080-1079	Jul	—
Jul	1094-1093	Sep	—
Sep	1114-1113	Dec	—
Dec	1137 SLR		
Mar	1164-1162	Volume: 21669	

ROBUSTA COFFEE ($)

Mar	1625-1615	Nov	1575 BID
May	1637-1630	Jan	1570-1550
Jul	1623-1617	Mar	1555 BID
Sep	1605-1600	Volume: 5792	

WHITE SUGAR (FOB)

Reuters		Dec	280.1-77.8
Spot: 270.9		Mar	283.3-82.3
May	272.5-72.3	May	288.3-83.3
Aug	276.0-75.8	Aug	294.3-87.0
Oct	277.3-77.0	Volume: 673	

MEAT & LIVESTOCK COMMISSION

Average fatstock prices at representative markets on March 5

(p/kg lw)	Pig	Sheep	Cattle
GB:	75.97	78.66	86.58
(+/-)	+3.30	+1.64	-0.85
Eng/Wales:	75.97	79.19	85.83
(+/-)	+3.30	+1.39	-0.63
(%)	-14.0	-8.0	-8.0
Scotland:	unq	77.05	89.51
(+/-)		+2.48	-1.16
(%)		-7.0	-22.0

ICIS-LOR (London 6.00pm)

CRUDE OILS ($/barrel FOB)

Brent Physical	13.00	-0.40
Brent 15 day (Apr)	13.65	-0.35
Brent 15 day (May)	14.05	-0.30
W Texas Intermediate (Apr)	15.00	-0.30
W Texas Intermediate (May)	15.40	-0.30

PRODUCTS ($/MT)

Spot CIF NW Europe (prompt delivery)

	Bid	Offer
Premium Unld	154 (-4)	157 (-3)
Gasoil EEC	130 (n/c)	132 (n/c)
3.5 Fuel Oil	66 (n/c)	68 (+1)
Naphtha	146 (n/c)	148 (n/c)

IPE FUTURES (GNI Ltd)

GAS OIL

Mar	128.75-29.00	Jun	136.00-36.25
Apr	130.50 SLR	Jul	139.00-39.25
May	133.25-33.50		Vol: 25260

BRENT (6.00pm)

Apr	13.68-13.69	Jul	14.78 BID
May	14.06-14.08	Aug	15.10 BID
Jun	14.45-14.48		Vol: 34079

GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES

LIFFE WHEAT (close £/t)		LIFFE BARLEY (close £/t)	
Mar	76.50	Mar	74.00
May	78.50	May	76.00
Jul	80.50	Sep	74.50
Sep	77.75	Nov	76.50
Nov	79.75	Jan	78.50
Volume: 227		Volume: 15	

LIFFE POTATO (£/t)

	Open	Close
Apr	60.0	60.0
May	65.0	65.0
Jun	unq	81.0
		Volume: 50

RUBBER (No 1 RSS Cif p/k)

Apr 48.50-49.00

LIFFE BIFFEX (GNI Ltd $10/pt)

	High	Low	Close
Mar 98	1100	1090	1100
Apr 98	1155	1140	1150
May 98	unq	—	1135
Jul 98	1000	1000	1000
Vol: 145 lots		Open Interest: 1527	

Index 1102 -2

LONDON METAL EXCHANGE

(Official) (Volume prev day)	Cash	3mth	Rudolf Wolff
Copper Gde A ($/tonne)	1753.5-1754.5	1775.0-1776.0	Vol: 2227400
Lead ($/tonne)	550.00-551.00	549.50-550.00	356700
Zinc Spec Hi Gde ($/tonne)	1039.0-1040.0	1065.0-1066.0	404600
Tin ($/tonne)	5435.0-5445.0	5480.0-5445.0	30750
Aluminium Hi Gde ($/tonne)	1434.0-1435.5	1451.0-1451.5	1538375
Nickel ($/tonne)	5380.0-5385.0	5475.0-5480.0	117798

LIFFE OPTIONS

	Series	Calls Apr	Jul	Oct	Puts Apr	Jul	Oct
ASDA	180	15	21	26½	4½	8½	11
(*188½)	200	4½	11½	16	15	19	21½
Abbey Nat	1150	66	109½	146½	55½	88½	108½
(*1170)	1200	45	85	122½	84	113	133½
All&Leic	900	47	74½	94½	41	63	74
(*904½)	950	25½	53	72	72	92	102
Alld Dom	550	33	51½	63½	20½	37½	41
(*558½)	600	13½	31½	42	50	66½	68½
BAA	550	28½	45½	55½	16	30½	36
(*561½)	600	9½	23	35½	45	59½	62
BAT Ind	600	56	79½	88½	13	32½	41½
(*648)	650	25	53	63½	36½	55½	65½
Barclays	1700	124½	194	234	47½	91½	115½
(*1761½)	1900	71	144	184	94½	140½	163
Bass	957	77½	99½	115½	17½	43	49½
(*1001)	1013	41½	70	88	41½	69½	76
Boots	850	66½	91½	110	13	31½	42
(*899½)	900	36½	63½	84	31½	53½	65
Br Airways	550	45	59½	78½	11½	30	36
(*578½)	600	17	32½	55½	34½	54½	61
BP	850	37½	67½	90½	28½	58	68
(*854)	900	16½	45	67½	57½	78	87
Br Steel	140	16	20½	23½	2	8	10½
(*153)	160	5	10	14	10½	18½	21½
C&W	650	31	57½	79	34	51½	63½
(*651)	700	14½	37½	58½	65	81½	92½
CU	1050	51½	92	114	32	57	82½
(*1082½)	1100	29½	66½	92½	59½	82	101
Glaxo	1600	102	179½	224	40½	89½	115
(*1655)	1700	60	129	174	89	135½	163
HSBC	1800	125½	222	269	86	159	189
(*1854½)	1900	79½	174½	222	141½	210½	239½
Halifax	900	55½	130	117½	30½	52	63
(*941)	950	27½	75½	92½	55	77	87½
ICI	1100	51	95½	119½	35	60½	80½
(*1112½)	1157	30½	70½	94	62	85½	104½
Land Sec	1050	58	95	114½	25½	42½	54
(*1089)	1100	40	59½	83	47½	65½	77½
M&S	550	35	42½	64½	11	25½	32½
(*569)	600	12	26	41	38½	52½	59
Nat Pwr	550	55½	75	86	12½	29	39
(*585)	600	28½	49	50	29½	54	65
Nat West	1050	75	120½	139½	29½	69	85½
(*1076½)	1100	51½	96½	114½	64½	94	108½
Reuters	580	56½	85½	102	13½	31	38½
(*629½)	645	25½	54	73½	38½	57	69
RyISun	750	40½	68	88	38	61	75½
(*757½)	800	21	47	67	69½	90	103½
Safeway	350	26½	40½	51	10	26	31½
(*374½)	375	13½	25½	38½	25	40½	46
Sainsbury	450	21½	37½	45½	12½	26	30
(*460½)	500	6½	17	28½	38	49½	53½
Shell	420	24	34	46	5½	21½	28½
(*435½)	460	7½	17½	28½	31½	43½	50½
Smkl Bch	800	50½	83	112	38½	63	73½
(*808½)	850	32	52	92	65	89	99½
Std Chart	850	58½	111	137½	62½	102½	118

	Series	Calls			Puts		
(*886)	900	27	52½	83½	33½	58½	66
Vodafone	500	53	73	91½	11	26	34½
(*540½)	550	24½	47	66½	31½	49	58½
Woolwich	380	21½	34½	43	13	23	29
(*368)	390	8½	21½	31½	31	40	45½
Zeneca	2600	128	231	301	87½	150	193
(*2648½)	2700	82½	180½	250½	142½	200	240½

	Series	Calls May	Aug	Nov	Puts May	Aug	Nov
BTR	180	17	25½	30	11	17	20½
(*188½)	200	8½	17	21½	22½	28	31½
Blue Circ	360	26	37	45	20½	25½	30½
(*371)	390	13	24	32	38	42½	47½
Br Aero	1900	130½	194	248½	88	126	152½
(*1930)	2000	83½	144½	199	148	177½	204½
Br Telecm	550	57½	72½	81	11	22	28
(*589½)	600	29	44	54	32	42	51
Cadbury	750	54	75	89½	25½	36	45½
(*782)	800	30	49½	63½	51½	61	69½
Energy Gp	800	45	46½	50½	3½	7½	8
(*839)	850	8½	17	11	48	33	27½
Gallaher	330	25½	32	37	15	19	25
(*345½)	360	11	18½	25	32½	38	41½
GEC	380	41	51	58	6	16	19
(*419)	420	23	33½	42½	19½	29	32½

	Series	Calls May	—	—	Puts May	—	—
Diageo PLC	613	51½	—	—	14	—	—
(*651½)	671	23½	—	—	42½	—	—

	Series	Calls May	Aug	Nov	Puts May	Aug	Nov
Diageo PLC	613	53	69½	—	16½	24	—
(*651½)	671	23	39½	—	46	52	—
Hanson	300	34	41½	50	7½	12	20
(*328)	330	17	24½	35	21	25½	34½
Imp Tob	420	26½	35½	44	17½	26	28½
(*423½)	460	11	18½	25½	42	49½	52
Kingfshr	1000	55½	83	101½	46	62	72
(*1007½)	1050	34½	60½	78½	76	90	99
Lasmo	280	22½	32	38½	12½	18½	21
(*288½)	300	13½	23	28½	22½	29	31
Ladbroke	300	26	38	46	12½	17	22
(*315)	330	12	24	32	28	33	37½
LucasVar	220	26½	33½	38½	7	11½	14
(*237½)	240	15	22½	28½	14½	20½	23½
P&O	800	43½	62	74	34	45½	56½
(*814½)	850	22	38½	52	64	74	84½

	Series	Calls			Puts		
Prudentl	850	78½	110	134	35½	55½	70
(*898)	900	55	85	108	59½	80	94
Rio Tinto	800	58	83½	98½	35½	51½	64
(*830½)	850	34	60	74½	63	77½	88½
Redland	330	20	25½	—	1½	½	—
(*345)	360	½	0½	—	15½	15½	—
R-Royce	260	23	32	38½	16½	25	29½
(*268)	280	14	23	27	27½	38	37
Tesco	500	41½	58	67	13	21	26½
(*529)	550	16	33	43½	38½	48½	49½
Utd Bisc.	260	19½	27	32	10	13½	17½
(*272)	280	10½	17½	22½	20½	24	27½

	Series	Calls Mar	Jun	Sep	Puts Mar	Jun	Sep
BG PLC	306	8	22½	—	7	19½	—
(*307)	330	1½	12½	22½	24	33½	38½
BSkyB	420	16	44½	54	10½	34	39
(*427½)	460	3	28	37½	38	56½	61½
Br Bio	80	11	21	27½	3	9	14½
(*89)	90	5	17	23½	7½	14	20½
Comlica	110	5	9½	14½	3	7½	9½
(*111)	120	1½	6	11	9½	13½	15½
Dixons	500	20	46	55	8	24	32
(*511)	550	3	25½	33	40	52	59½
EMI	548	16½	—	—	16½	—	—
(*548½)	575	6½	—	—	33	—	—
Granada	950	23½	63½	88	16½	40	57
(*958½)	1000	8½	40	63½	48	67½	83½
GUS	750	47½	82	102½	4½	25	35
(*792)	800	14	53½	76½	21	46½	57½
Lloyds TSB	900	37	94½	114½	22½	63½	77½
(*910)	950	15	70½	90	51½	89½	103
Lonrho	90	8½	11½	15½	2½	7	10½
(*93)	100	1½	7	11	8½	12½	16
Norwich	460	39½	59½	71	2½	17½	24½
(*498)	500	13½	34	50	14½	35½	45
Orange	330	11½	33½	44	11	27½	33
(*332)	360	3	21	31	30½	44½	49½
Railtrack	900	37	87	172	18	52	65
(*919½)	950	16	63½	87	45	75½	90½
Scot Pwr	500	18	47	57½	9½	31½	41½
(*506½)	550	3	26	38½	44½	61	70
Tarmac	100	7	11	13½	1	4	5
(*106)	110	1½	6½	9	5½	9½	10½
Tomkins	360	11	27½	35½	5	18	23
(*365)	390	1½	14½	22	27½	33½	39½
Unilever	560	21½	43½	58	4½	24	32
(*568½)	600	2	21	35	35½	52	59½

March 6 Total: 27048 Calls: 14333 Puts: 12715

FTSE INDEX (*5772½)

Strike	Calls Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Dec	Puts Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Dec
5600	213½	288½	337½	388½	641	25½	65	120	166	270
5650	171½	251	303	358½	—	35	100½	134½	174	—
5700	133	217½	273½	336½	560	50	117½	155	192½	307
5750	98½	187½	243	305	—	68½	137	174	211	—
5800	72	157½	213½	274½	522	91	157	185	230	345½
5850	49½	130	184	242½	—	118	181	216	250½	—
5900	32½	108	162½	219	486½	151	209	245½	277	393
5950	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol
Long Gilt	Mar 98	124-10	124-26	124-02	124-25	994
Previous open interest 181453	Jun 98	106-25	107-09	106-16	107-05	81941
German Govt Bond (Bund)	Jun 98	106.44	106.74	106.20	106.70	147299
Previous open interest 308133	Sep 98				106.30	0
German Govt Bond (Bobl)	Jun 98	105.00	105.00	105.00	105.13	50
Previous open interest 500	Sep 98				104.81	0
Italian Govt Bond (BTP)	Jun 98	118.00	118.34	117.90	118.27	36931
Previous open interest 125347	Sep 98	118.53	118.53	118.53	118.55	27
Japanese Govt Bond (JGB)	Mar 98	130.07	130.14	130.03	130.15	988
	Jun 98	129.80	129.88	129.77	129.87	1762
Three Mth Sterling	Mar 98	92.48	92.48	92.46	92.47	11944
	Jun 98	92.57	92.58	92.53	92.56	19170
Previous open interest 867907	Sep 98	92.71	92.72	92.68	92.71	16045
Three Mth Euromark	Mar 98	96.47	96.48	96.47	96.47	28904
Previous open interest 2260836	Jun 98	96.36	96.37	96.34	96.37	58105
Three Mth Eurolira	Mar 98	94.20	94.38	94.20	94.34	35157
Previous open interest 902742	Jun 98	95.28	95.38	95.27	95.35	51814
Three Mth Euroswiss	Mar 98	98.93	98.95	98.90	98.91	4111
Previous open interest 172079	Jun 98	98.71	98.73	98.66	98.68	9363
Three Mth ECU	Mar 98	95.70	95.71	95.69	95.71	699
Previous open interest 39886	Jun 98	95.76	95.81	95.76	95.80	646
FTSE 100	Mar 98	5660.0	5816.0	5660.0	5782.0	9125
Previous open interest 24250	Jun 98	5760.0	5870.0	5748.5	5851.5	5027

MONEY RATES (%)

Base Rates: *Clearing Banks 7¼ Finance Hse 8*
Discount Market Loans: O/night high: 8½ Low 7 Week fixed: 7¼
Treasury Bills (Dis): Buy: 2 mth 7; 3 mth 6¾. Sell: 2 mth 6⅞; 3 mth: 6⅞.

	1 mth	2 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
Prime Bank Bills (Dis):	unq	—	—	—	—
Sterling Money Rates:	7⅝-7½	7½-7⅜	7½-7⅜	7½-7⅜	7½-7⅜
Interbank:	7⅝-7½	7½-7⅜	7½-7⅜	7½-7⅜	7½-7⅜

Overnight: open 7¼, close 7¾.

	1 mth	2 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
Local Authority Deps:	7⅝	n/a	7⅝	7⅝	7⅝
Sterling CDs:	7⅝-7½	7⅝-7½	7⅝-7½	7⅝-7½	7⅝-7½
Dollar CDs:	5.58	n/a	5.58	5.61	5.75
Building Society CDs:	7⅝-7⅝	7⅝-7⅝	7⅝-7⅝	7⅝-7⅝	7⅝-7⅝

TREASURY BILLS: Applctns £555m allotted: £100m; Bids: £98.285% received: 90%; *Last week: £98.255% received: 80%; Avge rate: £6.8768% last wk £6.9691%; Next week:* £100m.

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)

Currency	7 day	1 mth	3 mth	6 mth	Call
Dollar:	5½-5¼	5⅝-5½	5⅝-5½	5⅝-5½	5½-4¾
Deutschemark:	3⅝-2¾	3½-3¼	3½-3¼	3½-3¼	4-3
French Franc:	3⅝-3½	3⅝-3½	3⅝-3½	3⅝-3½	3½-2½
Swiss Franc:	⅝-½	1-⅞	1⅛-1	1⅛-1	1½-½
Yen:	½-¼	½-¼	½-¼	½-¼	1-par

GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)

Bullion: Open $293.40-293.80 Close: $294.00-294.50 High: $295.00-295.50
Low: $293.25-293.75 AM: $294.25 PM: $294.90

Krugerrand: $298.00-300.00 (£181.50-183.50)

Platinum: $383.00 (£234.25) Silver: $6.165 (£3.755) Palladium: $237.00 (£144.95)

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Mkt Rates for March 6	Range	Close	1 month	3 month
Amsterdam	3.3728-3.3826	3.3790-3.3816	1½-1¼pr	3½-3¼pr
Brussels	61.720-61.930	61.818-61.917	25-20pr	62-55pr
Copenhagen	11.420-11.436	11.426-11.436	½-¼pr	1-½pr
Dublin	1.2009-1.2103	1.2069-1.2094	18-11pr	46-39pr
Frankfurt	2.9925-3.0014	2.9983-3.0007	1½-1pr	3-2½pr
Lisbon	306.15-307.07	306.55-306.88	¼-½pr	2½-2½pr
Madrid	253.56-254.34	253.68-253.99	73-63pr	196-178pr
Milan	2948.7-2951.9	2948.7-2951.9	49-32pr	132-109pr
Montreal	2.3205-2.3275	2.3246-2.3267	0.60-0.55pr	1.08-1.00pr
New York	1.6352-1.6388	1.6367-1.6376	0.29-0.27pr	0.745-0.717pr
Oslo	12.424-12.471	12.464-12.471	½-¼pr	1½-1pr
Paris	10.033-10.062	10.051-10.059	½-¼pr	1-½pr
Stockholm	13.160-13.206	13.179-13.194	½-¼pr	1-½pr
Tokyo	208.14-209.43	209.17-209.43	1½-1½pr	3½-3½pr
Vienna	21.052-21.113	21.094-21.113	½-¼pr	2½-1½pr
Zurich	2.4374-2.4433	2.4401-2.4433	1½-1½pr	3½-3½pr

DOLLAR RATES

Australia	1.4947-1.4958
Austria	12.90-12.91
Belgium (Com)	37.76-37.80
Canada	1.4203-1.4208
Denmark	6.9770-6.9790
France	6.1360-6.1380
Germany	1.8311-1.8316
Hong Kong	7.7413-7.7423
Ireland	1.3536-1.3586
Italy	1799.60-1801.10
Japan	127.72-127.83
Malaysia	3.9305-3.9500
Netherlands	2.0633-2.0638
Norway	7.6057-7.6133
Portugal	187.22-187.32
Singapore	1.6440-1.6470
Spain	155.15-155.20
Sweden	8.0431-8.0481
Switzerland	1.4887-1.4907

OTHER STERLING

Argentina peso*	1.6380-1.6407
Australia dollar	2.4446-2.4480
Bahrain dinar	0.6100-0.6240
Brazil real*	1.8522-1.8551
China yuan	13.418-13.718
Cyprus pound	0.8675-0.8865
Finland markka	9.0400-9.1810
Greece drachma	468.75-479.25
Hong Kong dollar	12.6663-12.6757
India rupee	63.87-65.17
Indonesia rupiah	n/a
Kuwait dinar KD	0.4950-0.5060
Malaysia ringgit	6.4311-6.4669
New Zealand dollar	2.8249-2.8301
Pakistan rupee	70.55 Buy
Saudi Arabia riyal	5.8925-6.0275
Singapore dollar	2.6916-2.6983
S Africa rand (com)	8.0440-8.2130
U A E dirham	5.9450-6.0810

*Barclays Treasury * Lloyds Bank*

FTSE VOLUMES

3i	808	Land Secs	868
AMVESCAP	1,100	Legal & Gn	2,700
ASDA Gp	7,300	Lloyds TSB	7,200
Abbey Ntl	22,900	LucasVarity	1,700
Allnce & Leic	776	Marks Spr	4,500
Allied Dom	2,100	NatWst Bk	4,500
AB Foods	1,100	Nat Grid	3,000
BAA	1,300	Nat Power	4,700
BAT Inds	2,800	Next	3,000
BG	3,100	Norwich Un	3,200
BOC	415	Nycmd Amer	295
BP	6,300	Orange	5,600
BSkyB	1,500	P & O	1,700
BTR	23,100	Pearson	2,500
BT	12,400	PowerGen	1,600
Bk of Scot	6,500	Prudential	3,400
Barclays	3,600	Railtrack	2,100
Bass	2,900	Rank Group	2,200
Billiton	3,800	Reckitt Col	894
Blue Circle	3,600	Reed Intl	3,800
Boots	1,000	Rentokil	6,000
BAe	1,800	Reuters	13,100
BA	4,800	Rio Tinto	1,600
Brit Energy	5,700	Rolls Royce	17,400
British Land	759	Ryl & Sun	14,500
Brit Steel	6,600	Royal Bk Scl	3,500
Cable Wire	3,800	Safeway	3,300
Cadbury	2,700	Sainsbury	1,500
Carlton Cms	746	Schroders	107
Centrica	10,500	Scot & New	1,700
Cm Union	2,700	Scot Power	2,800
Diageo	5,900	Svrn Trent	572
Dixons	2,600	Shell Trans	29,600
EMI	3,100	Siebe	2,700
Energy Gp	1,400	SmKl Bch	16,900
Enterpr Oil	803	Smiths Inds	1,400
GKN	1,600	Std Chartd	3,900
GRE	6,500	Sun Life	1,100
GUS	2,300	Tesco	3,300
Gen Acc	759	Thames W	274
Gen Elec	13,500	Tomkins	2,400
Glaxo Well	6,300	Unilever	5,900
Granada	677	Utd Utilities	1,800
HSBC	4,500	Utd News	347
Halifax	43,800	Vodafone	9,900
Hays	834	Whitbread	1,200
ICI	2,600	Williams	3,800
Kingfisher	1,600	Wolseley	219
LASMO	2,700	Woolwich	4,900

WALL STREET

	Mar 6 midday	Mar 5 close
AMP Inc	42¼	42¼
AMR Corp	134⅝	131⅛
AT & T	61⅞	60¼
Abbott Labs	75⅞	74¾
Advanced Micro	21⅝	21
Aetna Life	82¾	82⅝
Ahmanson (HF)	62⅛	61¾
Air Prod & Chem	82¼	82⅝
AirTouch Comm	42⅞	42⅞
Albertson's	50¼	49⅞
Alcan Aluminm	31⅞	31¾
Allied Signal	41⅞	41¾
Alum Co of Am	70⅝	70⅞
Amerada Hess	59⅞	59⅞
AEP	48⅛	48⅝
Amer Express	92¼	91⅞
Amer Genl Corp	59¼	59¾
Amer Home Pr	93	91¾
Amer Intl	120¼	119⅝
Amer Stores	25¼	25¾
Amer Standard	46¼	46
Ameritech	44¼	43¾
Amgen	52¼	52⅞
Amoco	84¼	84⅞
Andrew Corp	27¼	27¾
Anheuser-Busch	46⅞	46⅞
Apple Computer	23⅞	24⅛
Archer Daniels	23⅞	22⅝
Armco	5⅛	5¾
Armstrng Wrld	80⅛	78¾
Asarco	23⅛	23⅛
Atl Richfield	77⅛	77⅛
Atmel Corp	14⅛	14¾
Auto Data Pro	63⅞	61⅞
Avery Dennison	51¼	50⅞
Avon Products	73⅞	73¾
Baker Hughes	40¾	40¾
Baltim Gas & El	30¾	31⅛
Banc One	57¼	57⅝
BankAmerica	76¼	75⅞
Bank of NY	58⅛	58
Bankers Tr NY	119⅞	118¾
Bausch & Lomb	44¼	43⅞
Baxter Intl	55⅛	54⅞
Becton Dickinsn	64¼	63⅛
Bell Atlantic	94⅞	92¾
BellSouth	60⅞	59⅝
Best Foods	106⅞	104⅞
Black & Decker	48⅛	48
Block (H&R)	47¼	47
Boeing	52¼	52⅛
Boise Cascade	32⅞	32⅝
Boston Scien	58¼	58
Bristol Myrs Sq	102⅞	100
Browning Ferris	32⅛	32⅞
Brunswick	32⅛	31¾
Burlington Nthn	100⅞	100⅞
CMS Energy Corp	44⅞	44¼
CSX	56¼	55⅞
CBS Corp	31⅛	31
Campbell Soup	58⅞	58¼
Carolina Pwr	42¾	41⅝
Case Corp	64⅛	64⅛
Caterpillar	52¼	51⅛
Central & SW	26⅞	26⅞
Champion Intl	50¼	50⅛
Chase Manhat	121⅛	120⅞
Chevron Corp	84¼	84⅞
Chrysler	40⅞	39⅞
Chubb Corp	79⅞	79⅞
Cigna Corp	190⅞	189⅛
Citicorp	130	128¾
Clorox	86¾	86¾
Coastal Corp	64⅛	64⅞
Coca Cola	70	69⅞
Coca Cola Ent	33⅞	32
Colgate-Palm	83¼	79¾
Columbia Energy	76⅞	76⅞
ColumbiaHCA	29¾	26¾
Compaq Comp	28⅞	27¾
Comp Ass Int	50⅞	48⅞
ConAgra	30⅞	30
Cons Edison	43¾	43¾
Cons Nat Gas	55¾	55⅞
Cooper Inds	57⅞	56¾
CoreStates	84	83⅛
Corning Inc	41¼	41¾
Cwide Credit	45⅛	44⅞
Crestar Finl	56¾	55¾
Crown Cork	54⅞	54¾
Dana Corp	54¾	54⅞
Dayton Hudson	80⅞	79
Deere	56⅞	56⅞
Delta Air Lines	118⅞	115¾
Deluxe Corp	34¼	33⅞
Digital Equip	52⅞	51¾
Dillard Dept St	35¼	34⅞
Disney (Walt)	105⅞	105⅛
Dominion Res	40¾	40¾
Donnelley (RR)	39⅞	39
Dover Corp	39	38⅞
Dow Chemical	90	89⅞
Dow Jones	55⅞	54¾
Dresser	48⅛	47⅞
Duke Energy	58⅞	59⅛
Dun & Bradstreet	34⅛	33¾
Du Pont	62⅛	61⅞
Eastman Chem	65⅛	65¾
Eastman Kodak	[illegible]	[illegible]

	Mar 6 midday	Mar 5 close
Edison Intl	27¼	27⅞
Elect Data Sys	43⅞	43¼
Emerson Elec	63⅞	63¾
Engelhard Corp	18¼	18⅛
Enron Corp	47¼	47⅛
Entergy	27¼	28⅞
Ethyl Corp	8⅛	8⅛
Exxon	62⅞	62⅞
FDX Holding	64¼	64
FMC Corp	72⅛	70⅞
FPL Group	59¼	58⅞
Fifth Third Banc	77⅞	77⅛
Fleet Finl Grp	78¼	77⅞
Fluor Corp	48⅛	48⅛
Ford Motor	59⅞	57¼
Fort James	45¼	44¾
Fortune Brands	39⅞	39¼
Franklin Res	50⅞	49¼
GTE Corp	55⅛	54⅛
Gannett	63⅞	62¼
Gap Inc Del	44¼	42⅞
Gateway 2000	38¼	37¼
Gen Dynamics	87⅞	86¼
Gen Electric	78⅛	76¾
Gen Mills	71¾	70¾
Gen Motors	71¼	72⅛
Gen Reinsurance	213⅛	213¾
Gen Signal	40⅛	39⅞
Genuine Parts	36¼	36⅞
Georgia Pac	60⅞	60⅞
Gillette	109¼	106⅞
Glaxo Welc ADR	54⅛	52⅞
Goodrich (BF)	49⅛	49
Goodyear Tire	69⅞	68⅞
Great Lakes	47¼	46¼
Halliburton	46¾	49
Harcourt General	56¼	55¼
Heinz (HJ)	57¾	56¾
Hercules	47¼	47¾
Hershey Foods	70⅞	68¼
Hewlett Packard	61⅞	61⅞
Hilton Hotels	32¼	32⅞
Home Depot	65⅞	64⅞
Homestake Mng	10¼	9⅞
Honeywell	77¾	76¼
Household Intl	132⅞	129¾
Houston Inds	26⅞	26⅛
Humana	25⅛	25¼
Ikon Office	33⅞	32¾
Illinois Tool	60⅞	60⅞
Illinova	27¼	27¾
INCO	19¼	19¾
Ingersoll Rand	47¼	46¾
Inland Steel	21⅞	21⅞
Intel Corp	77¼	75⅞
IBM	99⅞	98⅞
Intl Flav & Fr	47¼	46¾
Intl Paper	48⅛	47¼
Jhnsn & Jhnsn	73¾	72¼
Kellogg	41⅞	41⅞
Kerr-McGee	68¼	68⅞
Kimberly-Clark	57¼	56⅞
Kmart	15¼	15⅛
Knight-Ridder	56¼	56⅞
Lilly (Eli)	65⅞	64⅞
Limited Inc	28⅞	28⅞
Lincoln Nat	81⅛	81⅞
Litton	63	62
Liz Claiborne	51¼	51¼
Lockheed Martin	114⅞	113⅞
Louisiana Pac	22¼	23⅞
MCI Comm	46⅞	46⅞
Manpower Inc	39¼	39⅞
Marriott Intl	78¼	77⅞
Marsh & McLen	89¼	84¾
Masco Corp	56⅞	55¼
May Dept St	62⅞	62⅞
Maytag Corp	44⅛	44¼
McDonalds	53⅞	53⅞
McGraw Hill	77¼	79⅞
Mead Corp	34⅞	34⅞
MediTrust Corp	30⅞	30⅞
Medtronic	52⅞	51⅞
Mellon Bk	62⅞	61
Merck Inc	126⅞	124⅞
Mercury Fin	0⅞	0⅞
Merrill Lynch	73	71⅞
Microsoft	81¼	80⅞
Minnesota Mine	89¼	88⅞
Mirage Resorts	24⅞	25
Mobil Corp	72⅞	71⅞
Monsanto	52	50⅞
Morgan (JP)	122¼	121⅞
Motorola Inc	57⅞	55⅞
Mylan Labs	20⅞	20⅞
Natl Semi	21⅛	21¼
Natl Service Ind	56	55¾
Navistar Intl	31	30⅞
NY Times A	63¼	63⅞
Newmont Mng	27⅞	27⅛
Nike B	46⅞	45⅞
NL Industries	15¼	15⅞
Nordstrom	63⅞	61¾
Norfolk Sthrn	34¼	33⅞
Nthn State Pwr	55¼	55¼
Norwest Corp	42¼	41¾
Occidental Pet	26¼	26⅛
Office Depot	28⅞	28¼
Oracle	[illegible]	[illegible]

	Mar 6 midday	Mar 5 close
Owens Corning	33¼	32
PPG Industries	68⅞	65¾
PNI Group	73¼	73¾
PNC Bank	56⅞	55⅞
PP&L Res	22¼	22¼
Paccar Inc	64	63⅞
Pacificorp	23¼	23⅞
Pac Enterprises	36¼	36⅛
PaineWebber	38⅞	38⅞
Pall Corp	20⅞	20¼
Parker Hannifin	47	46⅞
Peco Energy	21	20⅞
Penney (JC)	72¾	70¼
Pennzoil	69¼	68⅞
Pepsico	36⅞	36⅞
Pfizer	85⅞	85¼
Pharm & Upjhn	41¼	41
Phelps Dodge	64¼	64⅞
Philip Morris	43¼	42⅞
Phillips Pet	50¼	49¾
Pitney Bowes	48¼	49⅞
Polaroid	45⅛	44⅞
Procter & Gmbl	82⅞	80⅞
Providian	55⅞	53¼
Pub Serv E & G	32¼	32⅛
Quaker Oats	55⅞	54¼
Ralston Purina	99¼	98⅞
Raychem Corp	44¼	43⅞
Raytheon B	59¼	59
Reebok Intl	32¼	32⅞
ReliaStar Fin	46¼	46¼
Reynolds Metals	62⅞	61⅞
Rockwell Intl	59¼	58¼
Rohm & Haas	104¼	103¾
Royal Dutch	54⅞	54¼
Rubbermaid	27⅞	28
SBC Comms	76⅞	75¼
Safeco Corp	51⅛	51⅞
St Pauls Cos	89	87¾
Sara Lee Corp	56⅛	55¼
Schering Plough	73⅞	72⅞
Schlumberger	74⅞	76
Seagram	37⅞	37¼
Sears Roebuck	54¼	53¼
Shell Trans	42⅛	42¼
Sherwin Wllms	34⅛	33¼
Silicon Graphics	14⅛	14¼
Snap-On-Tools	43⅛	42⅞
Southern Co	25⅞	24⅞
Southtrust	42¼	42
Sprint Corp	67¾	66¾
Stanley Works	48⅞	48⅛
Starwood H & R	53⅛	53
Sun Company	41¼	40⅛
Sun Microsys	42⅛	43⅞
Suntrust	73⅞	72⅞
Supervalu	47⅛	46¼
Synovus Fin	36⅞	35¼
Sysco Corp	48⅞	48¼
TRW Inc	53¼	53⅞
TJX Hldgs	26⅞	26⅞
Tandy Corp	43⅞	43¼
Temple Inland	60⅞	59¼
Tenet Healthcare	36⅞	36⅞
Tenneco	42¼	42
Texaco	57⅛	57⅞
Texas Inst	55¼	53
Texas Utilities	39⅞	39⅞
Textron	73¼	72⅞
Thermo Elect	39¼	39⅞
Time Warner	70⅛	69⅞
Times-Mirror A	62¼	62⅞
Timken	32⅞	32⅞
Torchmark	45⅞	45¼
Toys R Us	29⅞	29⅞
Transamerica	121⅞	118⅞
Travelers	55¼	55¼
Tribune	66⅞	66⅞
UST Inc	34⅞	34⅞
US Bancorp	119⅞	115
UAL	86⅛	83¼
Unitrin	69¼	70⅛
US Inds	27⅛	26⅞
US West Comm	53⅞	52¼
US West Media	33¼	33⅛
USAirways Group	70⅞	68¼
USX Marathon	35¼	35⅛
Unicom	32¼	32⅛
Unilever NV	66⅞	64⅞
Union Camp	58⅞	58¼
Union Carbide	45¼	45⅞
Union Pacific	50⅞	50⅞
Unisys Corp	18¼	17⅞
USF&G Corp	24⅞	24⅛
United Tech	89⅞	88⅛
Unocal Corp	38⅞	38
VF Corp	48	47⅛
Wal-Mart Stores	50⅞	48⅞
Warner-Lambert	156⅛	157¼
Waste Mngmt	24⅛	24⅛
Wells Fargo	320⅞	320¼
Weyerhaeuser	50⅞	50¼
Whirlpool	67⅛	66⅞
Whitman	18⅛	17⅞
Winn Dixie	54⅞	54⅛
Witco Corp	39⅞	39⅞
Woolworth	23¼	23⅛
Wrigley (Wm) Jr	78	76⅞
Xerox	99¼	97⅞

THE TIMES TODAY SATURDAY MARCH 7 1998

NEWS

Chancellor acts on offshore trusts

■ The Chancellor launched a surprise pre-emptive strike against businessmen moving billions of pounds from offshore trusts in an attempt to avoid punitive taxes in the Budget.

The action, thought to have hit hundreds of wealthy people, shocked tax advisers who had been encouraging clients to exploit the rules to bring money back to Britain before the expected crackdown on offshore trusts on March 17 ..... **Page 1**

Kosovo village burnt by Serbs

■ The Kosovo village of Prekaz was being systematically burnt, still surrounded by Serb troops dug into forward positions beneath forests concealing Albanians hiding and fighting for their lives ..... **Pages 1, 16**

Railway profits

Ministers plan to force rail companies to share profits with the Government to curb windfall payouts to directors ..... **Page 2**

Operation cancelled

A woman waited nearly two years for a brain operation only for it to be cancelled because the surgeon's tools were blunt ..... **Page 3**

Gucci 'hated'

The former wife of Maurizio Gucci nursed such a fierce and insatiable hatred for the fashion designer that she ordered his killing, a former friend said ..... **Page 3**

United in grief

Catholics and Protestants united for the funerals of two lifelong friends, one from each tradition, killed in Co Armagh ..... **Page 5**

Flying the flag

The Union Flag will fly round the clock over Buckingham Palace and other royal castles when the Queen is not there ..... **Page 7**

Father Ted funeral

Mary McAleese, the Irish President, joined more than 2,000 mourners at the Dublin funeral of Dermot Morgan, the star of *Father Ted* ..... **Page 12**

Iraq inspections

Scott Ritter, the US weapons inspector vilified by Baghdad as a CIA spy, carried out "surprise" inspections in Iraq ..... **Page 13**

Suharto ignores IMF

President Suharto remained unwilling to carry through IMF reforms in Indonesia ..... **Page 14**

Redwood protest

Julia "Butterfly" Hill has spent 86 days 180ft up an ancient Californian redwood that is threatened by logging ..... **Page 15**

Terrorist row

Ehud Barak, the Labour Party leader and Israel's most decorated soldier, said that if he had been a Palestinian, he would have been a terrorist ..... **Page 16**

Patten book dispute settled

■ HarperCollins and Chris Patten settled their dispute over the dropping of his book *East and West*. Under the settlement of the breach of contract lawsuit the publisher has "unreservedly apologised" for any suggestion that it was rejected for not being up to proper professional standards ..... **Page 1**



ANDRÉ CAMARA

Anti-hunt protesters outside the Commons yesterday where, inside, the Bill to outlaw fox hunting was debated bitterly for five hours. **Page 1**

NEWS FEATURES

On a roll: Lord Irvine insisted on handmade "Pugin flock" for £300 a roll. *The Times* puts high street alternatives to the test ..... **Page 9**

Returning turtle: Loggerheads and greenbacks were almost wiped out by the plunder of their eggs ..... **Page 11**

File under G: The latest Chicago golf tourney has no bunkers — and misjudging the carpet pile could mean a quick exit ..... **Page 17**

Blow ups: Footage of America's nuclear tests was filmed by men who took appalling risks ..... **Page 20**

OPINION

Hourglass figures: We know the demographic timebomb is coming; but it will be affordable only if we start preparing now ..... **Page 23**

A serious offer: Israel, in a unilateral move, is ready to fulfil the conditions of UN Security Council Resolution 425 passed 20 years ago ..... **Page 23**

LETTERS

Superteachers; measles vaccination; Blair's freedom to worship; arts on TV; Lord Irvine's quarters; MCC membership decision ..... **Page 23**

COLUMNS

Simon Jenkins: I suspect this week has seen another ploy by the Big Science lobby. Nasa has long been superb at public relations ..... **Page 22**

Rachel Campbell-Johnston: Teenagers should let their elders dip into their pick'n'mix culture of Nike and Nicole Farhi, of Blur and Bach, of Emin and Ernst ..... **Page 22**

OBITUARIES

Jo Floyd, former chairman of Christie's; **Henry Livings,** playwright; **Lucien Bodard,** French journalist and novelist ..... **Page 25**

BUSINESS

Vickers: Ambitious plans for Rolls-Royce Motors include a trebling of current sales to 6,000 cars a year ..... **Page 27**

Liberty: The landmark London department story has halted redevelopment of its Regent Street site and written off the £8 million to £10 million costs ..... **Page 27**

Markets: The FTSE 100 rose 87.3 to 5782.9. Sterling fell from 105.6 to 105.4 ... **Page 31**

PERSONAL FINANCE

Why travel insurance premiums could be taking a tumble ..... **Pages 49-64**

SPORT

Rugby union: England's southern hemisphere summer tour was in doubt as 12 top clubs withdrew support ..... **Page 33**

Motor racing: Michael Schumacher was fastest in practice for the Australian Grand Prix ..... **Page 35**

Football: Jürgen Klinsmann seems certain to leave Tottenham at the season's end ..... **Page 37**

Golf: Andrew Sherborne had a second record of 64 to lead the field by two strokes in the Qatar Masters in Doha ..... **Page 40**

SECTIONS

the times magazine

Playboy prosecutor: Arno Klarsfeld — Nazi-hunting hero or loser? ..... **Page 18**
Awol army: Where have all Britain's soldiers gone? ..... **Pge 26**
Kylie Minogue: Grown up and in gear ..... **Page 40**

Big interview: Clive Owen on new film *Bent* .. **Page 6**
Mellordrama: Meet Kay Mellor, author of *Playing the Field* ..... **Page 22**
Surreal offer: See the Magritte show in Brussels for £119 ..... **Page 24**
Listings: ..... **Pages 26-43**

WEEKEND

House of straw: Inside the Prince's architecture institute ..... **Pages 1, 2**
On the farm: Jack Cunningham's view ..... **Page 3**
Final cut: Barber to the Broadway stars ... **Page 21**
Travel: South Pacific and Shanghai ..... **Pages 25-35**

HEALING

A-Z guide to complementary medicine. This week: from pain to ringworm

Vision

Seven-day guide to television and radio

mega

Why it could pay to catch the hoarding habit...

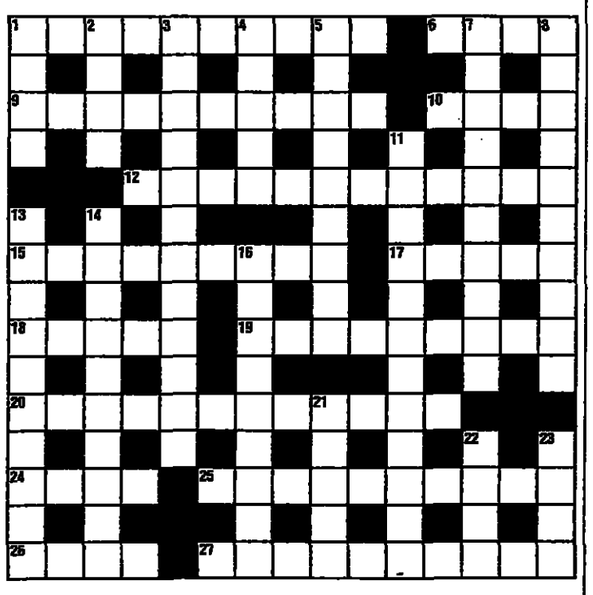
THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,733

A £20 book token will be awarded to the senders of the first five correct solutions opened next Thursday. Entries should be addressed to: The Times, Saturday Crossword Competition, PO Box 486, Virginia Street, London E1 9DD. The names of the winners and the solution will be published next Saturday.

Name/Address .....

.....

.....



ACROSS

1 Potato salad in US? As a rule, it's depressing (7,3).
6 Boss outstanding in game of cards (4).
9 In successive notes, loving to be disparaging (10).
10 Excessive concern some of us showed (4).
12 What's expert done? (12).
15 Cause of epidemic usually cut by two-thirds (9).
17 Private's less than perfect shot (5).
18 Splendid opening of tattoo in Edinburgh, okay? (5).
19 Tourists may be shown this mistake (9).
20 Where all the world was a stage? (5,7).
24 Group of students long affected by cut (4).
25 African hell-hole home to a Scot (10).
26 Pirate shot (4).
27 Meal partly cooked with sauce (10).

DOWN

1 Moderate coverage for members in part of France (4).
2 Approximate noise of bird (4).
3 Region of England in business releases (4,8).
4 Fight round roadblock, initially (3-2).
5 Fantastic rope, in a way, that can get one off the ground (9).
7 Risky thing to do in swimming race, at the end? (5-3-2).
8 Wants ideas rated differently (10).
11 Numbers of Romans to overhaul administrative organisation (5,7).
13 Rope highly tangled — it's hard to unravel (10).
14 A heartless lie to trouble enthusiast (10).
16 The sort of craze that's never long-lasting? (9).
21 Perplexed, but not high and dry (2,3).
22 Substance it's right to extract from corn before grinding (4).
23 Possible conclusions reached by trial jury could be just (4).

Solution to Puzzle No 20727

P	A	S	T	E		C	E	L	L	A	R	A	G	E
A		A		X		O		U		M		N		W
L	A	T	E	C	O	M	E	R		A	G	A	T	E
I		I		I		C		T		E		R		
M	E	A	L	S	O	N	W	H	E	E	L	S		
P		P		E		T		U		T		S		
S	E	P	T		M	E	M	B	E	R	S	H	I	P
E		R		S		R		U		S		E		I
S	H	O	R	T	E	N	I	N	G		U	S	E	R
T		P		A		T		S		I		I		
	R	O	G	U	E	E	L	E	P	H	A	N	T	
A		I		N		I		L						
D	R	A	M	A		S	A	N	A	T	O	R	I	A
Z		T		N		U		E		E		I		M
E	L	E	C	T	R	E	S	S		D	R	O	O	P

Solution to Puzzle No 20732

M	A	R	M	O	T		C	A	N	A	I	L	L	E
		G		A		E		L		O		G		E
B	R	O	K	E	N	D	O	W	N		L	I	F	T
		E		E		A		U		O		T		
R	E	A	S	O	N	E	D		S	P	O	T	O	N
		H		T		C		A				V		
M	A	L	I			U	N	G	L	O	V	E	D	
		G		F		B		C		E		F		R
B	O	A	T	H	O	O	K			F	I	S	T	
		N				T		O		S		T		
B	Y	P	A	S	S		O	V	E	R	H	A	N	G
		A		R		W		L		N		E		Y
B	U	N	G		A	D	A	M	S	A	P	P	L	E
		N		O		N		O		E		O		
S	T	A	N	D	A	R	D		R	E	G	E	N	T

LAST WEEK'S WINNERS: *H Bridshaw, Dunfermline, Fife; A Dudhia, Oxford; E Radcliffe, Deal, Kent; J Spencer-Palmer, Knebworth, Herts; J W Martin, Market Drayton, Shropshire.*

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HOURS OF DARKNESS

TODAY

Sun rises: 6.33 am — Sun sets: 5.51 pm
Moon sets 3.14 am — Moon rises 12.17 pm

Full moon March 13

London 5.51 pm to 6.31 am
Bristol 6.01 pm to 6.41 am
Edinburgh 5.59 pm to 6.47 am
Manchester 5.56 pm to 6.41 am
Penzance 6.14 pm to 6.52 am

TOMORROW

Sun rises: 6.31 am — Sun sets: 5.53 pm
Moon sets 4.02 am — Moon rises 1.15 pm

Full moon March 13

London 5.53 pm to 6.29 am
Bristol 6.03 pm to 6.39 am
Edinburgh 6.01 pm to 6.45 am
Manchester 6.00 pm to 6.39 am
Penzance 6.15 pm to 6.43 am

HIGH TIDES

TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
Aberdeen	8.48	3.5	9.34	3.9
Avonmouth	1.24	10.2	2.15	10.1
Belfast	6.17	3.0	7.06	3.3
Cardiff	1.10	9.6	2.01	9.5
Devonport	0.12	4.4	1.00	4.3
Dover	5.54	5.5	6.41	5.4
Dublin	7.02	2.6	7.39	3.6
Falmouth	-	-	12.31	4.1
Greenock	6.46	3.0	7.55	2.9
Harwich	6.32	3.4	7.14	3.2
Holyhead	5.37	4.5	6.25	4.5
Hull (Albert Dk)	9.53	7.4	1.37	7.2
Ilfracombe	6.30	7.1	1.21	7.0
King's Lynn	1.04	5.2	1.45	5.0
Leith	9.54	4.6	10.39	4.5
Liverpool	6.12	7.5	6.57	7.5
London Bridge	8.36	6.3	9.09	6.1
Lowestoft	4.37	2.2	5.08	2.1
Margate	6.40	4.1	7.22	4.0
Milford Haven	0.52	5.3	1.38	5.2
Newquay	-	-	12.53	5.3
Oban	1.47	2.8	2.30	2.9
Penzance	-	-	12.03	4.3
Portland	0.48	1.4	1.39	1.2
Portsmouth	6.34	3.9	7.24	3.9
Shoreham	6.04	5.1	6.50	5.0
Southampton	5.45	3.7	6.34	3.6
Swansea	0.59	7.5	1.41	7.5
Tees	11.06	4.5	11.48	4.6
Weston-On-Naze	6.30	3.6	7.17	3.4

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HIGHEST & LOWEST

Thursday: Highest day temp: Guernsey, 13C (55F); lowest day max: Loch Glascarnoch, Highland, 1C (34F); highest rainfall: Kirkwall Airport, Orkney, 0.55in; highest sunshine: Folkestone, Kent, 9.3hr.

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING
Recycled paper made up 41.4% of the raw material for UK newspapers in the first half of 1997

FORECAST

☐ **General:** Wales and most parts of England will be cloudy with light rain in places and the risk of sleet and snow over northern hills later. Northern England will have heavy rain at times. Sleet and snow over Scotland will turn to rain before clearing southwards later. Northern Scotland will have snow showers. Northern Ireland will have rain, heavy at times. Tonight most of England will be frost free but parts of Wales and Northern Ireland will turn frosty later.

☐ **London, SE, E England, E Anglia, E and W Midlands:** mild but windy with rain at times. Fresh SW wind. Max 13C (55F).

☐ **Cent S, SW England, Channel Iss:** mild but windy with some rain. Strong SW wind. Max 12C (54F).

☐ **S and N Wales:** spells of rain. Fresh W to SW wind. Max 11C (52F).

☐ **NW, Cent N, NE England, Lake Dist, Isle of Man:** heavy rain, turning to snow on hills in evening. Fresh SW wind veering N. Max 10C (50F).

☐ **Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, SW Scotland, Glasgow:** rain at first, turning to sleet. Fresh SW wind, veering N to NE. Max 6C (43F).

☐ **Aberdeen, Cent Highlands, Moray Firth, NE, NW Scotland, Argyll, Northern Iss:** sleet, snow showers. Fresh N to NE wind. Max 4C (39F).

☐ **N Ireland:** rain at times. Fresh W wind, veering N. Max 9C (48F).

☐ **Republic of Ireland:** bright intervals and showers. Fresh or strong W or SW wind. Max 12C (54F).

☐ **Outlook:** eastern England will have a few wintry showers with rain moving into western parts later. Cold weather in north will spread to most parts at start of next week. Scotland will be cold with snow showers in north and east tomorrow.



AROUND BRITAIN

24 hrs to 5 pm: b=bright; c=cloud; d=drizzle; da=dust storm; du=dull; f=fair; fg=fog; g=gale; h=hail; r=rain; sh=shower; sl=sleet; sn=snow; s=sun; t=thunder

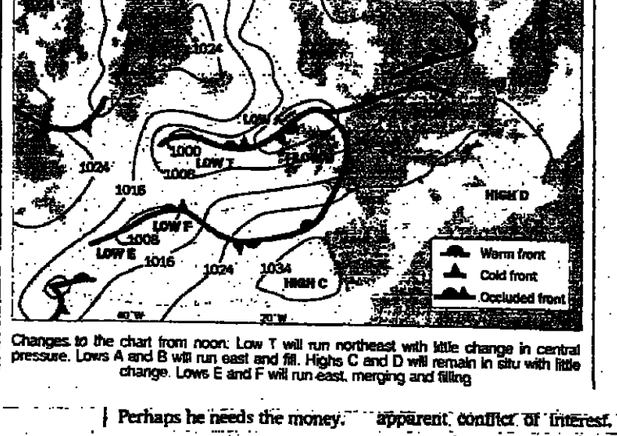
	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	Max F	
Aberdeen	4.9	0.09	6	43	sn
Anglesey	2.6	0.11	9	48	sh
Aspatria	7.0	0.02	7	45	h
Aviemore	4.5	0.09	2	36	sn
Belfast	3.5	0.25	6	43	h
Birmingham	5.0	0.07	9	48	s
Bognor R	7.5	0.04	12	54	s
Bournem'th	6.0	0.06	12	54	sh
Bristol	5.1	0.09	10	50	sh
Buxton	2.6	0.41	5	41	s
Cardiff	X				
Clacton	7.5	-	10	50	s
Cleethorpes	8.5	0.13	9	48	sh
Colwyn Bay	3.9	0.24	10	50	c
Cromer	6.4	0.04	9	48	s
Edinburgh	7.1	0.02	7	45	sl
Eskdalemuir	4.9	0.05	5	41	sn
Exmouth	5.3	0.14	12	54	s
Falmouth	3.9	0.13	12	54	sh
Fishguard	3.3	0.02	9	48	sh
Folkestone	9.3	0.01	12	54	s
Glasgow	5.3	0.09	6	43	sl
Guernsey	5.5	0.03	13	55	s
Hastings	8.0	0.02	11	52	c
Hayling I.	6.8	0.06	11	52	r
Herne Bay	6.3	0.01	11	52	s
Hove	7.0	0.05	11	52	sh
Hunstanton	4.5	0.01	9	48	s
Isle of Man	4.2	0.09	8	46	s
Isle of Wight	X	0.04	10	50	s
Jersey	7.3	0.12	12	54	s
Kinloss	1.9	0.12	5	41	sn
Leeds	6.3	0.10	8	46	sh
Leuchars	7.7	0.01	7	45	sh
Littlehmptn	7.9	-	12	54	s
London	7.5	0.02	12	54	s
Lowestoft	7.3	0.01	9	48	s
Manchester	2.5	0.26	8	46	sh
Margate	7.9	0.01	11	52	s
Minehead	5.8	0.24	11	52	sh
Morecambe	1.9	0.26	7	45	sh
Newquay	2.6	0.02	11	52	s
Norwich	6.0	0.01	10	50	s
Oxford	6.6	0.07	11	52	r
Penzance	X	0.04	11	52	sh
Poole	6.1	0.03	13	55	s
Prestatyn	X	0.17	10	50	r
Rhos on Wye	X	0.12	11	52	sh
Salcombe	4.4	0.06	12	54	s
Saunton Snd	3.6	0.08	11	52	s
Shrewsbury	5.1	0.05	10	50	sh
Skegness	7.3	0.06	9	48	sh
Southend	8.5	0.01	11	52	s
Southsea	7.4	0.05	12	54	r
Stornoway	4.5	0.12	3	37	sn
Swanage	6.7	0.13	11	52	s
Teignmouth	5.1	0.07	11	52	sh
Tiree	5.1	0.28	5	41	sn
Torquay	4.8	0.13	12	54	s
Weymouth	5.5	0.07	11	52	s

These are Thursday's figures

ABROAD

Ajaccio	17	63	s	Cologne	3	48	r	Madrid	18	64	f	Rome	15	59	f
Akrotiri	19	66	s	Corfu	16	61	f	Majorca	20	68	f	S Pr'faco	10	50	r
Alex'dria	19	66	f	C'phagn	1	34	t	Malaga	20	68	s	S Paulo	X		
Algiers	23	73	s	Dublin	7	45	s	Malta	17	63	s	Salzburg	8	46	c
Amst'dm	6	43	c	Dubrovnik	15	59	f	Melb'rne	17	63	f	Santiago	19	66	c
Athens	18	64	s	Faro	22	72	s	Mexico C	23	73	s	Seoul	15	59	s
B Aires	27	81	f	Florence	16	61	f	Miami	23	73	s	Sing'por	33	91	f
Bahrain	21	70	s	Frankfurt	9	48	c	Milan	13	55	f	Stckholm	-3	27	f
Bangkok	35	95	s	Funchal	21	70	f	Montreal	1	34	f	Strasb'rg	11	52	f
Barbados	30	86	s	Geneva	11	52	f	Moscow	5	41	r	Sydney	29	84	s
Barcelona	17	63	c	Gibraltar	18	64	s	Munich	9	48	f	Tangier	25	77	s
Beijing	12	54	s	Helsinki	-3	27	f	N Delhi	21	70	t	Tel Aviv	22	72	s
Beirut	18	64	s	Hong K	17	63	f	N York	7	45	s	Tenerife	24	75	s
Belgrade	21	70	s	Innsbruck	12	54	s	Nairobi	27	81	f	Tokyo	4	39	r
Berlin	6	43	r	Istanbul	15	59	s	Naples	15	59	f	Toronto	1	34	sn
Bermuda	17	63	s	Jeddah	26	79	s	Nice	20	68	s	Tunis	21	70	s
Biarritz	13	55	f	Jo'burg	26	79	f	Oslo	1	34	f	Valencia	20	68	s
Borde'x	15	59	f	L Angels	14	57	s	Paris	11	52	s	Vanc'ver	6	43	f
Brussels	7	45	f	L Palmas	24	75	s	Perth	33	91	s	Venice	14	57	c
Budapst	11	52	r	Le Tquet	10	50	f	Prague	7	45	f	Vienna	11	52	s
Cairo	20	68	f	Lisbon	17	63	s	Reykjavik	-9	16	s	Warsaw	6	43	f
Cape Tn	X			Locarno	18	61	s	Rhodes	17	63	s	Wash'ton	X		
Ch'church	27	81		Luxembg	4	39	sl	Rio de J	32	90	f	Wel'ngton	21	70	X
Chicago	3	37	f	Luxor	24	75	s	Riyadh	22	72	s	Zurich	7	45	r

Temperatures at midday local on Thursday. X = not available



Changes to the chart from noon: Low T will run northeast with little change in central pressure. Lows A and B will run east and fill. Highs C and D will remain in situ with little change. Lows E and F will run east, merging and filling



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Perhaps he needs the money. apparent conflict of interest. *business: He is buying Miller*

MARTIN

هكذا من الأصل

TIME OFF

TRAVEL, LEISURE & SPORT

Saturday 7 March 1998

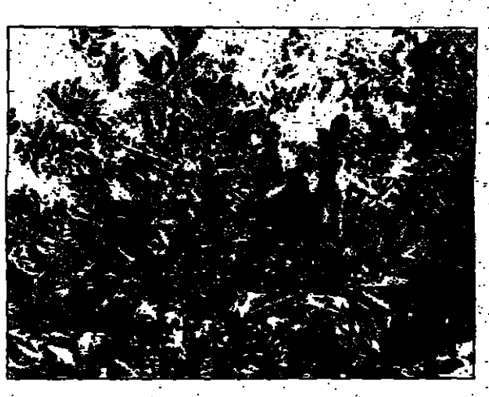
On top of creation

Normally, only parrots and toucans get an overview of the rainforest of Central America. **Simon Calder** joined them

Who the heck put that there? Anyone who has skied in the Alps will recognise the equipment. Yes, it is at altitude (about a mile high), and the base station lies in a valley. But the setting for this open-sided gondola is unlike any cable car you have ever seen. Instead of soaring above blanched mountainsides, it floats over Central America, a leaf's whisper above the rainforest canopy.

When I first heard about an "aerial tram", strung over the highlands of Costa Rica, I was horrified. How can anyone get away with plonking a gawking great piece of Alpine machinery in the middle of the country that has done more than almost any other to preserve its natural order?

Quite easily, it turns out. From the capital, San José, you approach the location on the road across the continental divide to the Atlantic port of Limón. This is a typical Costa Rican highway, which means its characteristics are (a) savage swerves, (b) unfeasible gradients and (c) a wildly three-dimensional



surface straight out of the Somme.

Wherever your gaze turns, it seems to be filled with an improbable amount of scenery: great brutes of rock impassively look down upon the timidity of man's endeavours, while patches of ultra-green jungle are highlighted by the tropical sun, then suddenly subdued when a cloud bumbles past.

Below you, especially on the bends that resemble the hairiest of pins, those gaping voids look ready to swallow up anything that moves an inch too far beyond the highway.

So it is something of a relief to stumble upon a cake shop.

A short way off the highway is a huddle of timber lodges that comprise base station for the Mesa Verde cable car. The restaurant at the centre sells all sorts of food, but a restorative slab of sponge and shot of coffee is what you need to bolster your nerves, here between the devil of a Costa Rican highway and the deep green sea of rainforest. Now you are ready to explore the settlement, and to discover that what could, from a distance, be taken to be a logging camp serves exactly the opposite purpose.

You find yourself being educated about the rainforest, and the creation of a theme park where the motif is nature, in a beguilingly unscholarly manner. This pre-flight briefing tees you up nicely for a preciously intense experience. With a bit of ungainly clanking, the gondola creaks aloft to a world that is humdrum to the hundreds of species of bird that make Costa Rica their home, but which few humans ever see: life in the treetops, on top of creation.

The ride lopes, rather than swoops, across the valley, swaying gently in time with the birdsong. This is terrain, you are told, that is in rejuvenation after a fire raged through it. Nature does that, which is why anyone desperate to preserve primary rainforest will have to put up with the trees – and those creatures that snuggle symbiotically within their embrace – being periodically reduced to ashes. You could be floating across the millionth version of this extraordinarily renewable resource.

Awe: not the call of a macaw, but the main emotion when you are confronted by the natural scheme of things. Close to the top, only the most energetic young buds emerge, and this sparse, magically translucent carpet allows you to peer through to the stout trunks of tropical hardwoods. Lower down, the branches knit increasingly closely with a web of ambitious creepers and waifish ferns.

The spectrum narrows to a flush of greens, which reaches its darkest conclusion when it merges with earth the colour and texture of treacle. To expand the colour range, just look up: the Costa Rican sky always seems to be ripped in a spat between blissful blue and baleful clouds whose mean darkness increases proportionately with the intensity of the sun sneaking through the gaps.

A non-violent U-turn (this is a cable car, not a Costa Rican bus) ushers you back the way you came, but so adroit is the concealment of the base-camp cluster that you are on your final descent before you see the 20th century approaching and shaking you roughly from your dream flight. This time, the cake tastes even sweeter.

You will have worked out that cable cars require a series of supports. How can this be achieved without devastating the forest floor? With difficulty. Donald Perry, the American behind the project, hired a helicopter from the Sandanista army of neighbouring Nicaragua to drop the pylons in. Environmental purists can make a sound case against the venture – not least on the grounds that it will encourage tourists to fly thousands of miles to hover above the rainforest. Yet if ever there were a means of creating instant affection for this fragile planet, the cable car achieves it.

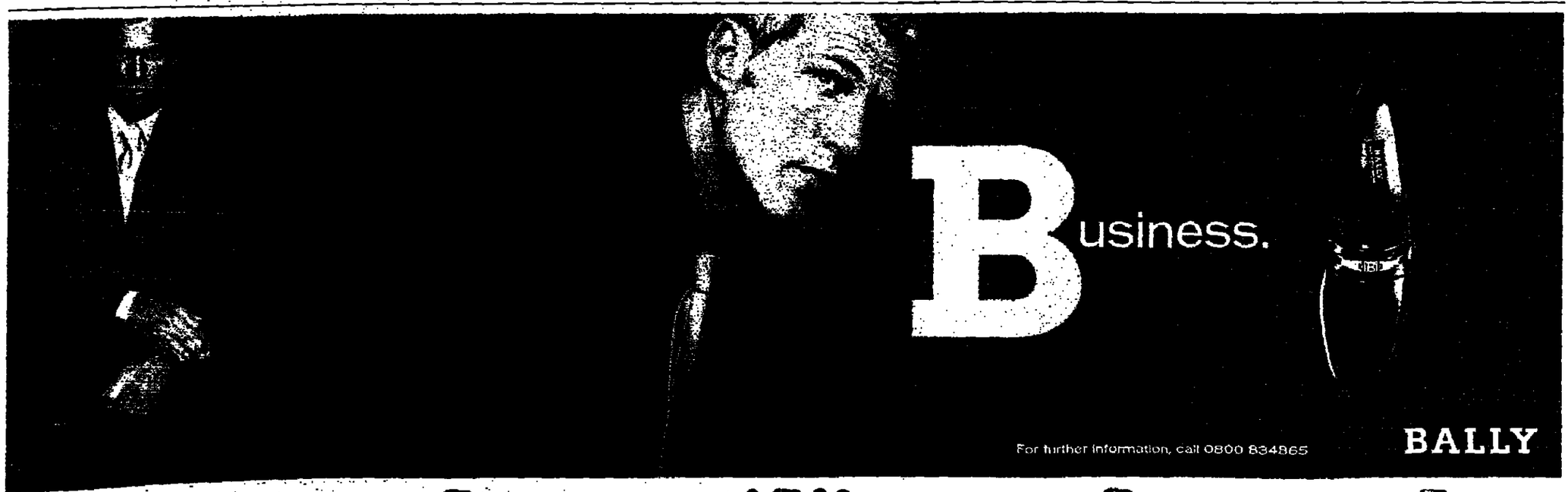
Continued page 3



In the green belt: the exotic flora and fauna of the Costa Rican rainforest, above and above left

Photographs: Chris Caldicott

INSIDE
ITALY Hamming it up in Parma
GARDENING Tropical exotica
SPORT
MOTOR RACING Schumacher's challenge/16
FIVE NATIONS Rugby's new order/17
FA CUP Redknapp's Wembley aim/22







Harbour retreat: the watery charms of Corsica
Photograph: Robert Harding Picture Library

France with a dash of Italy

If you want a spectacular overview of the island of Corsica, take the train to Calvi, suggests **Alan Murdoch**, and enjoy the ride

There's little to beat Corsica in the spring, and nothing to top exploring the island by train. Corsican rail journeys belong in the Chris Bonnington school of transport. Engineered with lavish use of dynamite, the line to Calvi is three hours of tunnels, viaducts and vertigo spiralling up to Alpine peaks, then down to a sparkling Ligurian Sea.

After Bastia's sprawling port, the terrain changes quickly to burned-out valleys. Zealous farmers' yearning for pasture for ever-more-scrawny, EU-subsidised cattle has led to indiscriminate burning of the thick hillside scrub – by autumn, entire valleys have become charcoal.

Powered by something Trojan in the diesel department, the "Micheline", Corsica's one-car mountain goat of a train, bravely scales near-impossible gradients above the central highlands, where the Bastia line leaves the southern route and meanders westwards, but mostly up. Slightly delayed by mountaineering cows, it arrives at Calvi along the beach.

Though the old harbour is a hive of life, the main out-of-season draw is a near-empty white beach, fringed by conifers beneath snow-capped mountains. Calvi's citadel, and a large camp along the bay, are home to France's Foreign Legion. Young recruits, immaculate in pill-box hats and sharp-pleated, pale-green shirts, stare into the camera shop window, a snapshot shrine to generations of decorated Beaux Gestes. In mid-October, the beach draws aeronuts from all over France. Its curious wind festival sees balloon races, microlight aircraft and dog-fights between giant kites.

France's largest wolves roam in the wilderness above. A ban on fishing means that marine life flourishes, keeping seals and peregrine falcons happy. When the crew hurl baguettes into the shallows, they prompt a churning, piranha-like frenzy of small, hungry jaws.

Re-entering Calvi harbour brings a bonus for Inspector Clouseau fans. In big letters on the breakwater is the command "*Vitesse limité à 3 noeuds*". French visitors are baffled at the joy pronouncing this brings to travelling British Peter Sellers fans.

Reputedly a refuge for Marseille criminals, Calenzana, three uphill miles inland, has at its sleepy centre a Baroque church filled with paintings, and wooden figures depicting Christ with curiously sensual overtones. Farther up the coast, threats appear on walls at the fashionable l'Île Rousse beach. The graffiti read "*Minet était un chat qui faisait miaou*" (Minet was a cat who miaowed). As if to allay fears about cruelty to cats, the letters "FLNC," are appended (the militant Corsican National Liberation Front).

Corsicans, who are governed from Paris but whose vernacular and landscape lean towards the Italian, cannot resist communicating on walls, trees – anywhere a splash of nationalism or footballing allegiance ("Forza Bastia !") will fit in. Past Calenzana, a narrative epic of spray-painted graffiti covers the road. Beside an open Bible and a heart, a jilted husband has recorded his wife's marriage vows and her infidelity. The last line reads simply: "*Eternité, Nicole?*"

Other Latin passions are on sale in every hardware shop. Corsica's prime souvenir (ubiquitous Napoleon kitsch apart) is a narrow knife with the brand name "Vendetta". For small grievances there are tiny, 3-in weapons; for serious grudges, up to 8-in blades. Under medieval Genoese rule, vendettas accounted for 900 Corsican funerals a year.

As Calvi's morning mists clear, a *Clochemerle*-style pantomime unfolds in the main street's Café Rex. Here, older men, coached loudly by friends, play poker for centimes, as larger-stakes games go on discreetly behind a carved wooden screen. Chris Waddle fans will enjoy the marble plaque commemorating a footballing anniversary: "*En souvenir du Milan AC, incinéré 26 Mai 1993 par Le O-M*" (in memory of AC Milan, murdered by Olympique-Marseille).

Another ambling train south leads to the central mountain stronghold of Corte, once Corsica's capital. After the plastic façades of today's capital, Ajaccio, the old architecture has a refreshing plainness: a spiral of small squares revealing cafés, restaurants and craft workshops, leads ever upwards to a towering citadel.

Corte is patisserie paradise. Bakers battle to produce the island's biggest cakes and flans. A smart new ethnological museum is tucked away inside the citadel, while the university gives the main streets a youthful vitality.

Close by are the epic Gorges du Tavignano and Restonica, and the more distant Capitellu and Nino mountain lakes. Tavignano winds via scree paths teeming with small green lizards, feeding numerous birds of prey. As if shod with crampons, half-starved brown cattle scale any ledge rumoured to support a blade of grass. Distant, tinkling bells announce unseen forest goats. If you can bear to look that far down, light glints off a near-white granite river bed, smoothed into natural, if chilly, swimming-pools.

Onward by road or rail, the Corte to Ajaccio journey is staggering. White granite peaks tower over forest and clouds around Vizzavona and Bocognano, mountain villages popular with hikers in summer. Just after dawn, groups of well-fed wild boar, who thrive on chestnuts and other forest protein, can be seen lying casually at the roadside. They are no joke when charging, but at rest they recall snoring drinkers after a lengthy pub lunch.

A return rail ticket from London Waterloo on Eurostar (0345 303030), via Lille or Paris, to Nice or Toulon costs £109. From there, you can catch an SNCM ferry (0171-491 4968) to Ajaccio or Bastia.

Air France (0181-742 6600) can offer flight connections via Paris; the fare from London is £225.60. Perhaps the best bet is an air/sea combination, using EasyJet (0990 292929) from Liverpool or Luton to Nice for £110.70 return (or more), then transferring to a ferry.

CHECK OUT

A plane
British Airways isn't having a brilliant week. After delaying a Jumbo load of Gatwick-bound passengers from Miami by 48 hours, the airline is being forced to off-load its remaining seats to Seoul at hilariously low prices. BA began flights to the Korean capital 10 years ago, when the city hosted the Olympics. But following the economic downturn in the Far East, the route is being ditched when summer schedules start at the end of March. Anyone who can fly there and back before then pays just £199 through Flightbookers (0171-757 2444).

A boat
Few tourists get as far north as Spitsbergen, location of the world's northernmost permanent settlement. On 23 August, though, a party of 48 will travel to the Arctic island – split between Norway and Russia – to begin a cruise through the far north aboard a former Soviet polar research vessel, MV *Professor Multanovsky*. From Spitsbergen, the vessel will set sail across the Greenland Sea for a voyage along the coast of east Greenland, ending in Iceland. The 13-day tour, organised by Noble Caledonia (0171-409 0376), costs £2,850 in a twin-bedded cabin (£910 extra for sole use). The price includes flights on SAS via Oslo.

A train
One-way rail tickets can be notoriously expensive: a standard single fromEuston to Birmingham New Street costs £32. But a new "Virgin Value" ticket reduces this to just £7. Other destinations to or from London: include Liverpool or Manchester (£9.50) or Glasgow (£15). Availability is heavily restricted, and you must book by 6pm the day before travel.

A room
... and a view for two at The Lanesborough hotel at Hyde Park Corner (0171-259 5599) costs £264.37 a night over Easter (9-13 April inclusive). This includes dinner and breakfast for two, half a bottle of Taittinger and, more prosaically, a space in the car park.

A meal
Aus-Mex? That's the latest cuisine on offer on Cancun Island in Mexico's Yucatan. Pioneers on the first scheduled flight from Gatwick this month can enjoy "bonzer burgers" at the resort's Outback Steakhouse.

A drink
Down 12 cans of Grolsch lager, and you qualify for a £77.20 return fare to Amsterdam from one of 16 British airports – including Aberdeen, Belfast, Birmingham, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Inverness, Leeds/Bradford, Manchester and five around London.

A week from today ...
... you could be on the Cook Around France weekend organised by Intratravel (01653 628862), departing from Dover to Calais next Friday (bring your own car). The cost of £180 includes three nights half-board accommodation at the Auberge du Val au Cèsne in Normandy, and two afternoon cooking sessions.

A month from today ...
... Gibraltar gets cheaper when £2 is lopped off high-season departure tax. It's now £7 to leave the Rock.

A year from today ...
... the Inuit people of Nunavut will be celebrating their new-found status as a distinct territory of Canada. Nunavut comprises the eastern half of the former North West Territories; the remaining bit becomes Western Territory. Contact the Visit Canada Centre, 62-65 Trafalgar Square, London WC2N 5DY (0891 715000, a premium-rate number).

Win

... a suitcase that meets British Airways approved dimensions – so you can take it on the plane as hand luggage. There are five cabin roller-cases in the Antler New Directions range to be won. Each case, usual price £59, has tear-resistant fabric and adjustable handles. To win one, contact Customer Services, Antler Ltd, Bury, Lancashire BL9 9EF (0161-764 5241; fax: 0161-764 0723). Be quick; the first five entries win.



THE INDEPENDENT

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It has long been associated with excellence in beauty treatments and is continually developing new and innovative treatments. Why not try the Multi-Method massage or Equilibrium which is a relaxing scalp neck and back massage.

Apart from their delicious healthy cuisine Ragdale Hall also offers a fully equipped gymnasium, a spacious studio for group activities and a luxurious swimming pool.

We have teamed up with Ragdale Hall to offer a two night stay for two people in a Suite, this also includes a free massage, or introductory facial or conditioning hand treatment per day.

The runner up prize is an overnight Relaxer Break in a Superior Room which includes a back and shoulder massage or facial.

To enter this competition simply dial the number below answer the following question on line and leave your name, full address and contact number:

Q: One of the therapies at Ragdale Hall involves placing needles into the skin at pressure points around the body - name this style of therapy.

Call 0930 563815

For further information on Ragdale Hall please call 01664 434831

Calls cost 50p per minute at all times. Winner picked at random after lines close 10 March 1998. Usual Newspaper Publishing rules apply. Editor's decision is final.

EUROBEAT: THE FULL RENE

The bad news from Belgium: if you want to attend the Dendermonde jazz pub crawl, you'll have to wait another year. The annual music-fuelled, minibus-assisted event was staged last night at a small town between Ghent and Antwerp.

The good news: yesterday also marked the start of the René Magritte centenary exhibition in Brussels, and it continues until 28 June. The man responsible for *Le Jockey Perdu* (pictured) has become *L'artiste célèbre*.

The venue is the Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts (00 322 508 3211), which already had the best collection of the Surrealist's work. These paintings have been augmented by a further 200 from collections world-wide, including some that are on show for the first time.



In short-break terms, Brussels is the flavour of the year so far. Faster Eurostar trains from Waterloo mean that Brussels has leapfrogged Paris in terms of accessibility – journey times are as low as two hours 30 minutes. You can reach the Belgian capital on Eurostar (0345 303030) for £79 return, so long as you book at least three days beforehand and stay a Saturday night.

For £86 more, Time Off (0990 846363) offers a three-night package using Eurostar trains, and including accommodation in the Leopold or Atlas hotels and a timed ticket to the exhibition.

The Musées Royaux is the centrepiece of "1998 – Year of Surrealism", a programme of events across Belgium, with film shows, readings, even walking tours. A "Magritte and modern art" exhibition at Ostend's fine Museum of Modern Art focuses on work inspired by the Surrealist.

For details of the Full René, contact the Belgian Tourist Office, 29 Princes Street, London W1R 7TG (0891 887799, a Surreal premium-rate number).

Simon Calder



SIMON CALDER

Remember the breath of fresh air that Virgin Atlantic brought to flying when Richard Branson's airline started up on the Gatwick-Newark route? Fun and irreverence were the key words, especially on the inaugural flight when a bunch of journalists (and a few unfortunate fare-paying passengers) drank the plane dry. Mr Branson had to be restrained from naming the economy section "Riff-Raff", which would have made "Upper Class" passengers feel even more superior. Legend has it that the in-flight movie was the aviation disaster spoof, *Airplane*. But 13 years on, Virgin could be losing its freshness – at least if you take its flight VS3019 on that original route.

The reason is aviation's current fad: code-sharing. As reported last week, Virgin and Continental Airlines have teamed up to acquire a tranche of new flights without needing a single extra plane. They take an allocation of seats on each other's flights, which means that VS3019 is a Continental DC-10 rather than a Virgin Jumbo. For passengers who like Virgin's grown-up attitude to flying, the consequences are disconcerting. No seatback video. No *Hot Air* (one of the few readable in-flight magazines). No swearing.

That's right, no swearing. I'm not suggesting that Virgin's flight crew are free with the expletives. But the in-flight entertainment provided by Mr Branson's airline is presented, uncensored, as the artists intended. Because Virgin aircraft are fitted with individual seatback TV sets rather than a big cabin screen, the airline can show risqué material without fear of offence. When Continental is pretending to be Virgin, though, it censors the in-flight movie – and even the songs on its audio programme. I found this out last Saturday when flying on the Newark flight. The movie soundtrack sporadically muted, even though the characters' lips mysteriously kept moving. Across on the only listenable audio channel is devoted to rock legends such as Pink Floyd. The track selected was "Money" from Dark Side of the Moon, which includes the word "bull****"; on Continental, the asterisks are replaced by audio mush.

The flight, though, was the best I've had for years, because it was less than half-full. I stretched out across four other seats (I don't know whether they were Virgin or Continental ones, and in exchange for an economy ticket costing £455 I got more sleep and comfort than those paying five times as much up front in Upper Class – or BusinessFirst, as it turned out to be.

Coming home, one employee made up for the over-sanitised absence of profanity. I won't reveal where or when I took the flight, because the poor chap was evidently having a bad day. But Continental may wish to improve the soundproofing between the cargo hold and the main passenger cabin. The plane missed its appointed departure slot, due to what the pilot said were "a few last-minute bags". (This phrase has always intrigued me: it implies that some ill-disciplined luggage has been hanging around in the airport bar until the last possible moment, whereas in fact most people's baggage arrives, with them, and hour or two before the flight.)

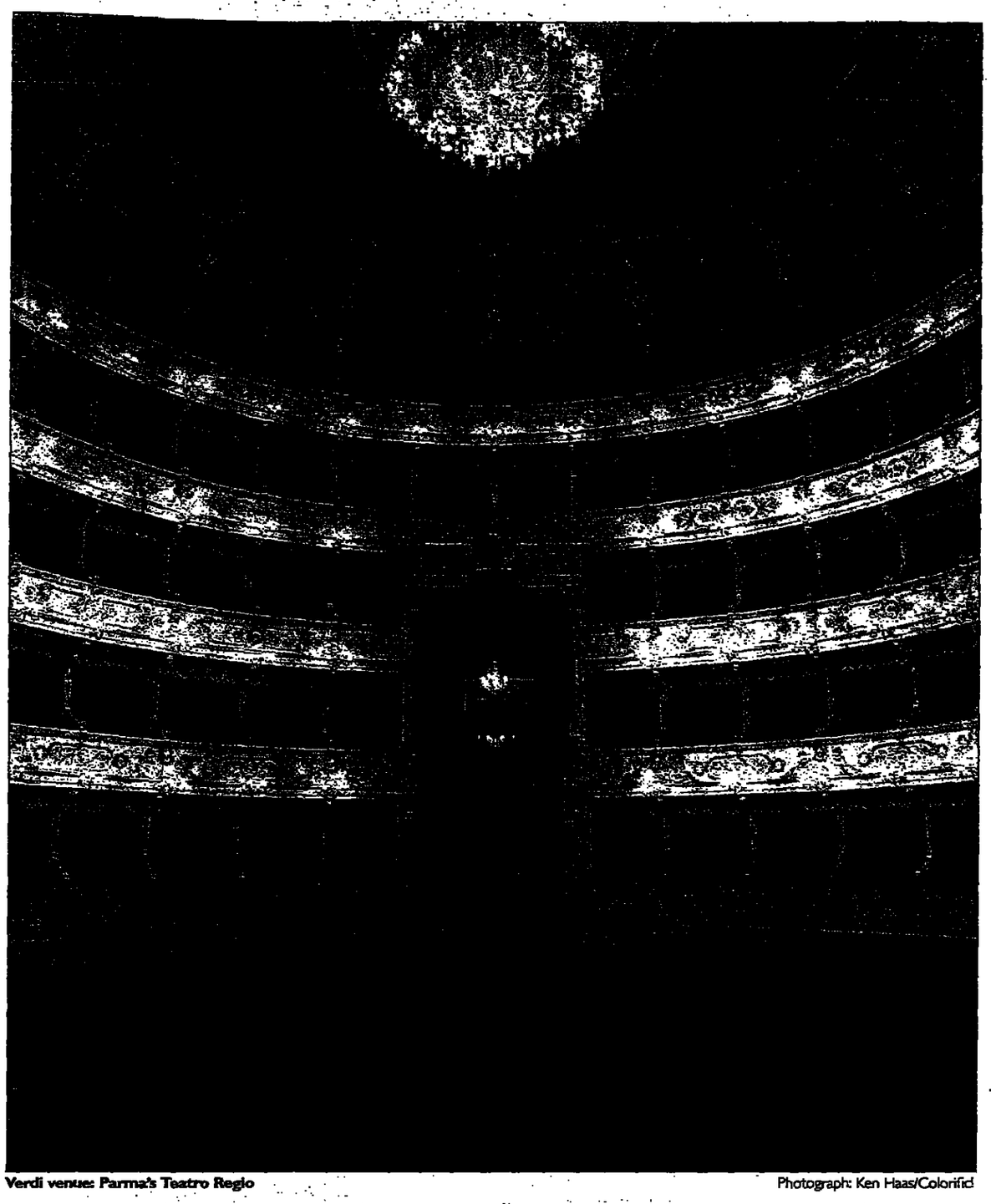
Continental prides itself on punctuality, to the extent of paying staff $100 bonuses when it achieves the top on-time award from the US Department of Transportation. Perhaps this is why feelings ran high. A luggage loader was buried deep in the hold. I presume his supervisor said something to the effect of "You're delaying this plane". To the audience in the economy cabin, which fortunately was entirely adult, the response was "No f***ing s***? I don't give a goddamn". This time, the expletives were undeleted.

The delay was a matter of minutes, rather than the two days suffered by British Airways passengers in Miami this week. BA refunded the fares of the weary travellers, and in addition paid them £500 each.

According to the onerous terms of the Warsaw Convention, a scheduled airline ticket is nothing more than a vague promise to get you from A to B, quite possibly via C, at a time of the airline's choosing. Perhaps BA was fearful of legal action in the US. Whatever, it has raised passengers' expectations of compensation, so expect a big fuss next time a plane is seriously delayed.

The exquisite charm of Parma

Elegant, dignified and secretive, this Italian city has architectural glories to rival those of its cheese and ham, writes **Natasha Edwards**



Verdi venue: Parma's Teatro Regio Photograph: Ken Haas/Colorific

Parma, a misty calm of palazzos and hidden squares, lacks the magic appellation "Tuscany" that has led to lesser towns being overrun with tourists. This wealthy town in Emilia-Romagna has a calm dignity, and an elegance that epitomises the Italian *senso civico*; even the swarms of mopeds seem better behaved than most, and the place is blessedly free of souvenir-hawkers and horse-drawn charabancs. This ancient fief of the Farnesi, between Milan and Bologna, is well worth a visit, thanks to two artists (Correggio and Parmigianino) and an architect (Antelami) who made their mark here.

Orientation is simple. The historic centre is enclosed within a circle of boulevards on either side of the sleepy river Parma.

Our hotel, the family-run Hotel Button (one of the few in the historic centre) lay down a narrow side street beside the 17th-century town hall and the elegant cafés of Piazza Garibaldi. It was perfectly positioned for exploring on foot the narrow streets lined by palazzos, and for peering into secret courtyards.

"Secret" is the key word. Many of the best things in Parma are carefully hidden, so that the streets – with their shoe shops, and bars selling wickedly strong espresso coffee – give little hint of what lies behind.

First stop: just near the tourist office, iron gates and a shady grove lead to the Camera di San Paolo (also known as the Correggio chamber), convent buildings famed for the extraordinary, umbrella-vaulted room painted with frescoes by Correggio in around 1518.

Within a mass of fruit and foliage are lunettes containing chubby cupids – an obscure allegory much debated by art historians – while, below, *trompe-l'oeil* pillars and monochrome figures of the Three Graces and other mythological characters further display the artist's virtuosity. It's a peculiarly intense fantasy, playing with perspective and chiaroscuro, and lacks the oversentimental pathos with which I'd associated Correggio, and which made him so popular with the Victorians.

Drop into the post office across the road, too: the outside looks Baroque; the interior is surprising Art Nouveau, with murals and a glass roof.

Past the shops of Strada Cavour and the narrow Strada del Duomo lies the magisterial cathedral square, with its bishops' palace on one side. The Duomo has a stepped façade in northern Italian Lombard style, and a pink portal supported by two gentle-looking lions. The Romanesque interior is awash with paintings: the Cappella Valeri, with frescoes by Bertolini de' Grossi's life of Christ, a Baroque pulpit with baldaquin, and a dome painted by Correggio. Here he lets fantasy go full swing as tiers of tiny, unidentifiable saints and angels disappear into a pyramid of fluffy clouds. In the transept is a bas-relief of the Deposition, from a tomb signed and dated Benedetto Antelami 1178; it is one of the few clues to this mysterious sculptor and architect.

Antelami's masterpiece is next door: the baptistry. If there was one thing – other than the first true Italian ice-cream of the season – that really made me fall for the city, it was this. Its pink marble exterior is pretty, but the inside is an awe-inspiring octagon of numerous open galleries, with frescoes by Italian primitives illustrating the saints and the life of Jesus.

Back on the Via Garibaldi, another church merits a visit, the Chiesa della Madonna della Steccata. Its decoration is by Parmigianino, the other huge talent of Parma, and features outsize, twisting female figures, typical of 16th-century Mannerism.

From here it's only a minute to the austere-looking Palazzo della Pilotta, home to the archaeological museum, the fine arts museum – more Correggio, Parmigianino and other local artists, as well as a few other treasures, such as a tiny Leonardo head – and the extraordinary Teatro Farnese.

The theatre was more important in its conception than in its use. It was built in the 17th century by Duke Renuccio I, who was determined to impress his Milanese rivals, but it was rarely used. It could seat 3,000 people, and was once the biggest theatre in Europe, a vast wooden structure modelled on Palladio's Teatro Olimpico at Vicenza. The theatre was badly damaged in the Second World War and beautifully restored only a few years ago; it is all the more impressive for being unexpected, at the top of a draughty staircase.

Another fine theatre, the Teatro Regio (entrance in the Via Garibaldi), is famed for its operatic performances; it is the best place to hear Verdi.

Of course, Parma is also about food, and it is hard to escape evidence of two of Italy's most delicious gastronomic exports: Parma ham and Parmesan cheese. We discovered a perfect delicatessen at either end of the Via Garibaldi and the Strada Farini, the ceilings laden with huge, dangling hams and windows full of tempting artichoke salads, aubergines and fresh pasta, but every Formica-furnished café produces little rolls filled with melting Parma ham.

We ate well at the Ristorante-Taverna Gallo d'Oro (the golden cockerel), a warren of little rooms and levels, dining on *vitello tonnato* and generous ravioli. Less conventional was the place we stumbled across on our first evening, the colourful Café Rangon, so named, according to a long explanation propped on the fireplace, because the aforesaid Rangon received Garibaldi here on his descent through Italy. Today it's simple, friendly and local, with a slightly arty crowd, and bright paint. The chef rustled up a plate of local ham and cured sausages and salad, and a delicious sweet, sticky tart made of amaretto biscuits. The waitress, meanwhile, recommended a glass of dark fortified wine – a perfect invitation to *la dolce vita*.

Getting there: the closest airport is Bologna, with flights from Gatwick on Alitalia, and Heathrow on British Airways. The lowest fares are likely to be available from discount agents such as Sky Shuttle (0181-748 1333). For a long weekend later in March, the company is quoting a fare of £196 including tax on British Airways from Heathrow. There are frequent fast, cheap trains from Bologna to Parma.

Accommodation: Natasha Edwards paid £40 a night for a double room at the Hotel Button (00 39 521 208093). The other centrally located hotel she recommends is the Best Western Hotel Stendhal (00 39 521 208057), which costs £100 per night.

Costa Rica: on top of creation

From page 1

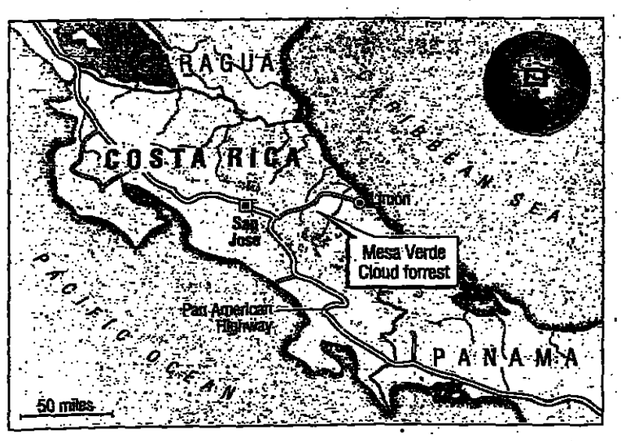
Affection accompanies you throughout a trip to Costa Rica. I'm even fond of the squabble of unofficial currency dealers that greets new arrivals at San José airport, resembling a battalion of bandidos. Though these fellows look even shiftier than the immigration officials, you soon realise you are unlikely to be robbed either by them or their poorer, more desperate compatriots in the ragged quarters of San José.

You know those places where you feel instantly at home, even though you are thousands of miles from domesticity? The capital of Costa Rica is like that. The main street is a riotous shambles, but dart down any side street to devour a stack of tortilla and you will make friends, if not for life then at least for as long as it takes to gulp down a beer.

Every visitor gravitates to El Pueblo, an entertainment complex on the (relatively) affluent north side of town. Imagine a mock-colonial village infiltrated by some swaggeringly good restaurants, and you have a place which feels a bit like the set from an Hispanic soap opera. It's tremendous fun: when San José flutters its civic eyelashes and pouts, you can almost believe you're in Buenos Aires.

The more you look around, the more you suspect you are the only member of the audience to have accrued your wealth by entirely legitimate means. With luck, a Bolivian band will bring a rarefied Andean repertoire for the benefit of a well-heeled clientele. The shrill panpipes will resonate with tuneful gasps that tempt you deeper into Latin America. That happened the first time I came here, and within a year I was gasping through La Paz. But I keep coming back to Costa Rica, to partake of a commodity that both the people and the land share in abundance: good nature.

Simon Calder bought his flights through South American Experience (0171-976 5511), flying to Miami on Virgin Atlantic, and onwards to San José on American Airlines. The best price at present for this route is £455 return, including tax.



PACIFIC SPECIFICS

Getting there: From Britain, there are no direct scheduled flights to Costa Rica, so visitors from the UK will need to change planes en route. At the moment fares are reasonably low: Journey Latin America (0181-747 3108), for example, is currently offering a return ticket on Iberia via Madrid for £512 including tax.

Getting around: The easiest way to get to the middle of nowhere in Costa Rica is to arrange a package with one of the lodges – which will include flying to a tiny airstrip cut out of the forest, straight from San José in a chartered air taxi. Independent travellers can fly with the domestic airline Sansa to Golfito, gateway to the Peninsula de Osa and Golfo Dulce region, and either arrange to be met at the airport or travel on by taxi-boat or local air taxi to most lodges along the coast. Tracopa runs a daily bus service between San José and Golfito, which takes eight hours. Once in the rainforest, walking and swimming will be the only ways of getting around.

Where to stay: The mid-priced Tiskita Jungle Lodge, located among 250 acres of virgin rainforest on the Pacific coast, offers wooden cabins built in the forest with rustic outdoor bathrooms, and wide-platform verandas looking out over the treetops and the ocean. Meals are eaten communally in the open-sided dining-room at the main lodge.

Tiskita is bookable direct in San José (00 506 255 2011). Prices start at around £309 for a two days and nights all-inclusive deal, including transfer flights from San José, or with Worldwide Journeys and Expeditions (0171-381 8638) which offers tours from London (including flights) and can include Tiskita and other lodges all over Costa Rica, at prices from £2,085 for two weeks. Other lodges in the area include the more luxurious Lapa Rios Lodge and the more basic Corcovado Lodge Tent Camp.

What to bring: This really is the middle of nowhere, so don't forget to bring everything you may need with you, including a torch (the solar-powered electricity lasts only until dinner is over), insect repellent and all the necessities for walking, swimming and hot sun. And keep an eye out for giant scorpions.

Chris Caldicott

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Brighton rocks: the beach may be pebbly but that doesn't diminish the appeal of Britain's first seaside resort *Photograph: David Swanborough*

Why go now?
The weather may be overcast, but the glamour of this appealing seaside town more than makes up for it. Britain's first resort seems to bear a permanently glazed grin, as though a municipal-sized, mood-enhancing narcotic has recently been swallowed.

Beam down
Connex SouthCentral whisks you from Victoria station in London to Brighton in a record-breaking 49 minutes. A weekend return costs £18.

You can also catch a train direct to Brighton from Birmingham, Bedford, Bristol – and dozens of places that don't begin with B. Call 0345 484950 for times.

Get your bearings
Brighton station is currently under wraps: the scaffolding that conceals its glorious Victorian ironwork will be in place for the next three years, giving the station an atmosphere of a bomb shelter.

First impressions may be a little subdued therefore, but the station does, at least, provide an easy geography lesson. Go straight ahead, down the gentle slope to the sea. To your left are Brighton's extraordinary palace, the Indian-dressed Pavilion, and the Lanes, the town's old centre; to the right is the main shopping area. The Tourist Information Office (not altogether helpful the day I was there) is a short walk away at Bartholomew Square between the Lanes and Brighton beach. Here you can pick up a map of central Brighton for £1 and a leaflet of walks for another 75p.

Check in
The Grand (01273 321188) on Kings Road, looking down on the seafront and across to the West Pier, still holds the reputation of being Brighton's biggest and best hotel, complete with swimming-pool, sauna and multi-gym. Prices for weekend breaks here (minimum two nights) are £75 for bed and breakfast per person per night, for a room without a sea view, to £95 for a room with a view – and £125 for added luxury.

If you would prefer a more personal ambience in the same area, try the Dove Hotel (01273 779222) at 18 Regency Square, owned and run by the Kalinke family. Rooms facing the back are £45 per person per night; seawards you pay £10 more. Prices are for *en-suite* facilities and also include a welcoming drink when you arrive.

Meanwhile, there are plenty of options for backpackers – for a cheap sleep with a sense of history make for the Traveller's Rest (01273 747551) at 20 Middle Street in the Lanes. You pay £9 to stay in a dormitory (or £12.50 per person for a small room) in the house where William Friese, the inventor of cinematography, carried out his experiments.

Take a hike
In fact, not so much of a vigorous stroll as a gentle amble, as you wander through the Lanes – the medieval heart of Brighton – guided by your walking leaflet. This maze of alleyways once housed fisherfolk; now the area has been turned over to twee shops and theme cafés, yet the character of the quarter has somehow survived.

Lunch on the run
Fish and chips, of course. For a good selection, head for the seafront. Tony's Plaice, on the corner of Middle Street, is not being idle when it boasts that it has "probably the best fish and chips in town". Cod and chips here costs £3.

Cultural afternoon
Make for the Royal Pavilion, that astonishing palace sitting just inland from the seafront, right next to the A23. John Nash imported ideas from India, laced them with themes from China and created an elaborate Oriental residence. The amazing twirls of the roof preside over an architectural compendium ranging from imitation Islam via ersatz Egyptian to counterfeit Chinese.

The sum of all the parts makes an extraordinary monument to aristocratic arrogance. Open daily, 10am-5pm, adults £4.10, concessions £3, children £2.50, family ticket (two adults, four children) £10.70.

Meanwhile, Brighton Museum, just north of the Pavilion, is everything a municipal museum should be. It houses an eclectic range of local bequests and other exhibits, from a Dali sofa modelled on Mae West's lips (circa 1936) to a re-creation of old Brighton, complete with entire shopfronts. Open 10am-5pm Saturdays, and weekdays except Wednesday, 2-5pm Sunday. Admission free.

Window shopping
They're all here. The most interesting stores are in North Laine, east of the station, where retro and vintage clothing outlets rub shoulders with hardware stores and funeral directors.

An aperitif
The King and Queen (01273 607207) at 13 Marlborough Place is a large, jolly folly of a pub built on the site of an 18th-century farmhouse whose timber-beam styling it copies. As you order your drink at the bar, admire the décor – the place is hung about with mock armour, model sailing ships and more.

Demure dinner
From Californian to Cuban, the theme restaurant flourishes in Brighton. One place where the ambience has not been imported is English's Oyster Bar (01273 327980) in East Street, three fishermen's cottages knocked into a narrow restaurant. The walls are heavy with scarlet velvet, and the interior is so cramped that diners are obliged to be seated side by side. Main courses include the likes of monkfish baked in garlic for £12.95.

Sunday morning: go to church
An astonishing brick barn of a church, St Bartholomew's at Ann Street, on the edge of the city centre, was described by Nikolaus Pevsner as "an unforgettable experience". And few could disagree.

Its sheer scale is staggering, and its décor, though sparse, is striking. High Mass here, with full works – swinging incense, elaborate music – is glorious. Open 10am till dusk. Solemn high Mass is at 11am on Sundays, evensong and benediction at 3.30pm.

Bracing brunch
Food for Thought in Kensington Gardens, North Laine, serves home-made breakfast all day. English Breakfast (bacon, egg, sausage etc) costs £2.50, as does the vegetarian version (egg, beans, tomato).

The icing on the cake
Of course, no trip to Brighton would be complete without a breezy stroll along the Palace Pier – still in one piece, unlike its forlorn West counterpart. With its Brighton rock stalls, palmists and funfair, Palace Pier is kitsch, noisy, and fun – everything a British beach resort should be.

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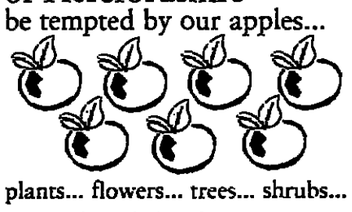
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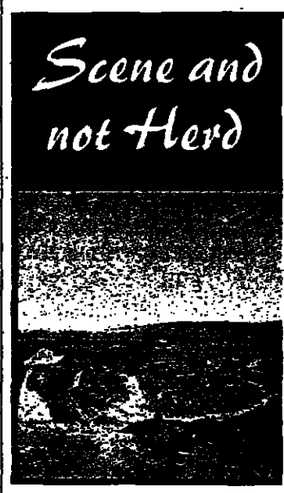
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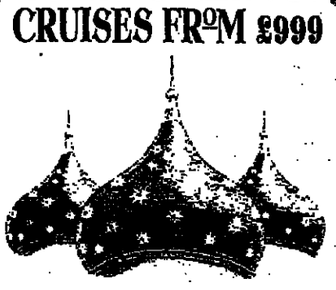


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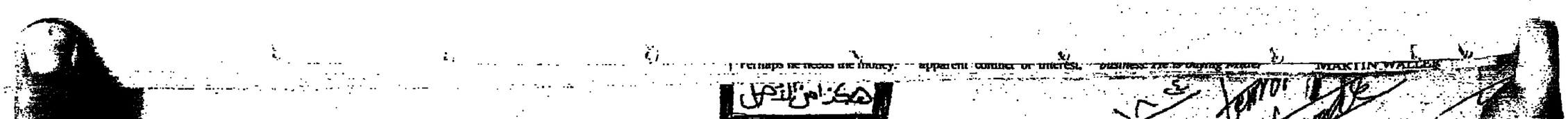
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Overseas Travel also appears on pages 6, 7 & 8.



To be or not to be acting in Stratford

Take centre stage, and imagine yourself as Portia, Malvolio, Lear... **Catherine Stebbings** goes behind the scenes at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre







Treading the boards: theatrical tour of Stratford

Photographs: John Lawrence

All the world may be a stage, but there is one set of boards in Stratford that every stage-struck player dreams of treading. And though the Royal Shakespeare Theatre may be at the top of any thespian's CV, mere groundlings can strut and fret on the most famous stage in the world, before joining the audience for the real thing.

Daily tours backstage reveal the mechanics, skills and organisation needed to produce the fabulous illusions we see from our seats. Actors check their rehearsal timetables in a grubby little lobby, stage managers and electricians make final adjustments. Huge architectural structures stand patiently alongside minor props in the wings. You are invited to take centre stage, to imagine yourself as Portia, Titania or Lear. The tour ends in the intimate little Swan Theatre next door, where once again you can imagine performing.

There have been performances of Shakespeare's plays on the banks of the river since 1769, when the first Shakespeare festival was held to celebrate David Garrick's jubilee. Today's Royal Shakespeare Theatre was opened in 1932, and since then the Royal Shakespeare Company has included most of the century's greatest actors – Ralph Richardson, Peggy Ashcroft, Kenneth Branagh, Juliet Stevenson and many more.

A theatre ticket may be the only way to spend the evening in south Warwickshire, but Stratford-on-Avon offers plenty for the visitor on a day out before a performance: Shakespeare's birthplace, Anne Hathaway's cottage, Mary Arden's house ...

The visitors

Three friends from Kingham Hill school, Lucy Kelly, 12, Claire Barden, 14, and Ellie Noble, 13, went on a theatre tour and saw *Twelfth Night* at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre (RST).

Lucy: I love acting, so to stand on stage at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre was really exciting. I would love to perform there one day.

The tour did make me realise how hard it is to be an actor, and how many people are involved in a production. Everything was so organised. All the scenery was carefully positioned, and the small props, such as money, letters and handcuffs were laid out neatly on a table for the performance. I was amazed at how steep the raking of the stage was; it must be tiring to act on such a slope.

The tour took us into the wings and on to the stage of the RST, and then into the Swan Theatre, which I had never seen before. It was really lovely, and very intimate. The tour was a good length, interesting and informative.

It was good to see one of Shakespeare's plays in his home town, but I found the performance of *Twelfth Night* a bit confusing in some parts because I find the language difficult. I need to prepare better next time.

Claire: I really enjoyed the day. The tour was very good and I learnt a lot about the theatre itself. The lady told us a bit about the company, how the actors audition and then have a two-year contract in which they act at the RST and in London, and go on tour. I was surprised to find so much space behind the stage; I thought it would be much smaller. It was nice to see some of the scenery close up. The hedge was really clever; it was made out of green hair-twisters. The tour was not too long; it was interesting and nicely informal. We could even take photos if we wanted.

Although I had prepared myself for the play, I did find some of it hard to follow. However, in doing the tour I felt much more in tune than I had been before, with the theatre in general and the work involved in the whole production.

Ellie: Stratford is a really historic town. I loved all the timbered houses with their low doors and little windows. We visited all the places connected with Shakespeare, such as the house where he was born, his school, his wife's house and the church where he was married and buried. His grave was disappointingly small. Anyway, I got an idea of the place where he had lived. Although there are lots of tourist shops in Stratford, there is a wide variety of other shops which are good for teenagers and older people, so that was fun.

The theatre had a really nice setting beside the river, with lots of swans and ducks. I have never seen the back of a theatre, so the tour was very interesting. I had always wondered how they changed scenes and lighting, so it was good to find out. The lady who took us round was really friendly, but did assume that we knew some terminology. I guess some school groups, like the drama school students who we went with, would have been told a little bit beforehand, whereas we just went along as tourists.

The deal

Stratford is tricky to reach by train: there are frequent services from Moor Street in Birmingham, but only one train every two or three hours on the main line from London Paddington and Oxford. By car, the M40 makes Stratford easy to reach from almost anywhere. Limited car parking outside the RSC, large car park opposite the Royal Shakespeare Theatre a short walk away.

The Royal Shakespeare Company perform in their three theatres in Stratford – the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, the Swan Theatre and the Other Place. Current performances include Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Merchant of Venice* and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*; *Bartholomew Fair* by Ben Jonson; *Roberto Zucco* by Bernard-Marie Koltes; and *Goodnight Children Everywhere* by Richard Nelson. Tickets cost from £5 to £38 (01789 205301).

Backstage tours take place daily 1.30pm and 5.30pm. They last about 45 minutes. Admission for adults costs £4, for students and OAPs £3, Sunday family ticket £12. It is advisable to book in advance (01789 412602).

Food: In the theatre complex, snacks are available at the River Terrace Café bar and full meals are served at the Box Tree Restaurant. There are excellent bistros and restaurants on Sheep Street, opposite the theatres.

Other attractions: Shakespeare's birthplace, open daily 9am-5pm, adults £4.50; children £2. Nash House and New Place, open daily, 9.30am-5pm, adults £3, children £1.50. Hall's Croft, open daily 9.30am-5.30pm, adults £3.50, children £1.50. Anne Hathaway's cottage, open daily, 9am-5pm, adults £3.50, children £1.50. Mary Arden's house, open daily 9.30am-5pm, adults £4, children £2. Opening times are 30 minutes later on Sundays, and change between October and March for all these sights. Five sights inclusive ticket: adults £10, children £5, OAPs £9, family £26.60.

GREEN CHANNEL

Good news for turtles: people in the Caribbean are worried about you. The area is home to six species of endangered sea turtle, and populations throughout the Caribbean are declining rapidly. Turtles are sensitive to light, movement and noise while they are ashore nesting. The construction of beachfront hotels often causes erosion of beaches and creates obstacles and disruption that put the nesting turtles out of sorts for laying eggs.

But the Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network is championing the cause of turtles and encouraging hotels to take action to minimise the impact of tourists on nesting beaches. The aptly named Turtle Beach Hotel in Tobago has modified its lighting to reduce unhappy effects on the turtles and their hatchlings, has employed guards to ensure beach etiquette during turtle watches, and is removing all beach furniture, jet skis and boats from the beaches at night to give the turtles a free run.

Bad news for Bushmen in the Kalahari desert: your home is nowhere near as safe as a turtle's. The Bushmen – the original inhabitants of southern Africa – are living in extreme poverty after being removed by the Botswanan government from their last refuge, the Central Kalahari Game Reserve. The government maintains that the Khwe settlements in the reserve are incompatible with management and conservation of wildlife and future tourism development. Large areas have been set aside as tourism zones, and wildlife protection is given priority. The Bushmen have asked to be involved in tourism, but there are no signs that they will be.

Ironically, the reserve was set up in the 1960s as a safe haven for the Bushmen and the animals they hunted, and is one of the largest protected areas in Africa. Until last year, around 1,000 people lived there permanently and around 3,000 had customary land and resource rights. Now only about 200 remain and they are fighting for their indigenous rights to the land.

Survival International is fighting the Bushmen's corner in European political circles. An international outcry led to the Botswanan government shelving its plans to move the Bushmen two years ago, when even Prince Charles and Norman Tebbit took up their cause. Survival International hopes to raise enough support to deter the Botswanan government from evicting the remaining Bushmen and for the expelled Bushmen to be allowed to return.

Sue Wheat

RED CHANNEL

What you should bear in mind before travelling to Iran, Libya or Syria

"If you observe a medically controlled diet you will have to restrict your eating habits to a far greater degree than you would at home. Do not take chances; if you are offered something you are unsure about, refuse it."

"For our tours to Libya and Syria it is essential that your passport does not bear an Israeli stamp or other evidence of your having visited areas under Israeli control or occupation. If your passport does bear such stamp or evidence, you will be unable to travel with us unless you obtain a new passport."

"Women travellers to Iran are not obliged to don the chador, the ubiquitous black cloak worn by Iranian women, except for entry into certain shrines. A plain scarf and loose-fitting long coat will do just fine."

"It may seem obvious to say it, but you should not enter into any political discussions or make criticism of your host country's government."

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Extracts from the Iran, Libya and Syria brochure of Caravanserai Tours (0181-691 2523).

LOW ROAD

In Birmingham last week, I paid £36.50 for a night at the Campanile Hotel (0121-622 4925) – a Crossroads-like motel on the edge of the city centre. Two more people could have joined me in the room for the same price, though logistically it is difficult to see how.

HIGH ROAD

If only my budget had stretched to the most opulent nearby option, Wood Norton Hall at Evesham in Worcestershire. This Victorian retreat is owned and operated by the BBC, and marketed by the Virgin Hotel Collection (0800 716919). A single room costs £90, a double £120 – but this includes a huge breakfast.

Simon Calder

Steep, stony scree, and the surprise of Blencathra

Fell walking is an acquired taste, writes **Ronald Turnbull** – but this Lakeland mountain may appeal even to a 10-year-old

Where in the Lakes do you take a couple of children who are sure they're not going to take to fell walking? Adults will go up a stony slope for two or three hours, crouch behind a cairn peeling oranges with cold fingers, and then come back down again on sore feet – and persuade themselves that they've had an awe-inspiring tussle with the elements.

But kids are realists. Children don't even get to that windswept cairn. They stop after half an hour and say they're tired now, and they propose to eat the oranges right away and then go back down. They aren't really tired at all; they could keep going all day if they could see any good reason to do so. But it takes more than a mere parent to persuade them.

However, a mountain called Blencathra may just do the trick. Blencathra is the first hill on the right as you come in along the A66. Its trick is this: it starts as nasty as they get – stony, loose, and relentlessly steep. And then, when you've done about a third of it and can't see how you're going to bear another two-thirds, it turns into a rocky crest.

Rocky crest bears the same relation to hill walking as computer games do to computer-assisted learning. It is hill walking; but it feels as if it isn't. You only have to do the first 1,000ft of Blencathra. The rest of the mountain just does itself.

Well, that's the theory. But daughter-aged-10 scrambles up the first of the rocks, stops at the top and bursts into tears. Was this all a big mistake? No; but it was a small one.

I'd failed to point out the Path Round the Side. We're doing these rocks because we want to, not because we have to. It's a distinction I should have remembered from my own schooldays. On Tuesdays we had compulsory cross-country – with a gym teacher at the end with a stop-watch: intended to be, and being, hateful. On Thursdays we had voluntary cross-country with Mr Finch the French teacher – and everybody went.

Mr Finch's physical psychology works again for Jessie. Like the guardian angel at the bed-foot, the path consoles simply by being there, while the rocks are what we actually go up on. On either side, steep heather plunges into stream valleys that really are quite a long way below. Back down the ridge, there's a helicopter-type view of the A66 and the field patterns of Threlkeld.

A couple with a cocker spaniel are having difficulty here as they lead the dog around the rocks on steep grass that's really rather dodgy (and would be even dodgier in the wet). Bravely straight up the front is, here, the easy way to go – but I refrain from pointing a moral so dangerously inapplicable to real life as lived away from Blencathra. The ridge hauls us rapidly upwards, and deposits us, like a lift set for "roof", at the very summit cairn.

"Is that it?" asks son-aged-12 – not what children, or even grown-ups, usually want to know at the top of a 2,500-ft ascent.

Blencathra's plateau is a wide, flat place, short-grassed for picnics. Although it's on the rim of the Lake District, it's in fact the 12th highest. The deep slots of Borrowdale and St Johns-in-the-Vale are laid below, leading the eye into the central fells, and naturally you start to wonder whether you might manage England's highest, Scafell Pike ...

The way down is even more important than the way up. Walking up is tiring, but walking down hurts. This path goes down beside – or, if you prefer, inside – a small, splashy stream, then wanders horizontally along the side of the Glenderamackin valley, which is almost as long as its name. This horizontal is important; it's the relentless descent, turning out to be even worse than going up was, that makes a mountain such as Great Gable so particularly mean and horrible. The path drops into a small car park at the back of the Scales Inn. The idea of this car park was that they'd hang around finishing up the mint cake while I got a bit of healthy exercise running back to Threlkeld, where we'd left the car. But nobody except me wants to do that.

So we walk back around the bottom of Blencathra, looking down on farmhouse and A66, up at Our Ridge being spiky against the sky, and forward to the sunset and Cat Bells.

No mountain is altogether perfect. At the bottom of Blencathra there isn't anywhere at all that sells ice-cream.

BLENCATHRA FOR BEGINNERS

Given suitable conditions – warm, dry rock and no strong wind – the Halls Fell Ridge can be happily undertaken by children of eight upwards, and even some six-year-olds. An adult for every child is a sensible ratio. Children aged 10-12 often have a sense of adventure combined with a lack of judgment, and need close supervision.

As on all hill walks, the top can be unexpectedly cold, and children chill more quickly than adults. The best map is the Outdoor Leisure 5 (North-east Lakes). The walk, with stops at summit and tarn, takes about five hours.

There is car parking in Threlkeld. The tarred lane at the west end of the village leads up through a farmyard; a path above a stream leads to the foot of Halls Fell. The small car park at the foot of Mousthwaite Combe fills up early in the day.

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Travel in the frame

A highlight of last weekend's Destinations '98 event in London was the gallery featuring finalists in *The Independent/ Wanderlust* magazine/ Nikon Travel Photograph of the Year competition. The winners were shown last week, but the quality of photography was so high that we are featuring some "highly commended" entries today and next weekend.

Clockwise from top left: Jim Sherwood's arresting shot, taken during Holy Week celebrations in Seville, *is the work of a brilliant moment.*

In contrast, Guy Moberly approached his dignified portrait of a beggar in Belem, Brazil, with enormous patience: "I spoke to him for a week, before lying down on the pavement and taking this shot."

You can feel yourself wanting to reach out and tug the whiskers of the intense Indian man, captured down by the riverside ghats in Varanasi by Dagny Nome.

Warthogs get a poor press, so it is good to see a energetic example of the beast, captured in Kenya by David Rhys Morris: "an interesting change from the *cheetahs I had been photographing for three weeks*".

Jenny Balfour-Paul visited Guizhou province in China to research for a book on indigo. "This man was sitting on the roadside. I liked the look of him beneath his ragged hat, gently smoking."

John Hulme's intimate study of Thai "Ladyboys" (transvestites) backstage at a theatre in Chiang Mai, shows humanity as well as a strong sense of place.

These were among the finalists selected by Lyn Hughes and Paul Morrison, respectively editor and publisher of *Wanderlust* magazine, who have established and nurtured the competition with professionalism and enthusiasm. More next week.

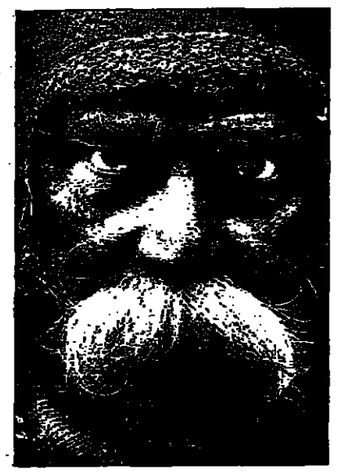












Photographers and locations, clockwise from top left: Jim Sherwood, Seville, Spain; Guy Moberly, Belem, Brazil; Dagny Nome, Varanasi, India; David Rhys Morris, Nairobi National Park, Kenya; John Hulme, Chiang Mai, Thailand; Jenny Balfour-Paul, Guizhou, China. The competition has proved so successful that we will run it again this year. Details in 'The Independent' and 'Wanderlust' magazine (subscriptions: 01753 620426) in the autumn

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The voice of the country

When more than 285,000 rural folk invaded London last weekend spirits were high, but beneath the good humour was a deep anguish. **Duff Hart-Davis** joined the marchers and captured the mood

Despite all those stories about the Countryside March being "hijacked" by one sinister organisation or another – by an American tycoon, by the Conservative party, by British big business, by the pro-hunting lobby – nobody hijacked the marchers. Nobody bribed 285,000 people to give up the day and go to London: we went of our own accord, goaded by resentment and apprehension.

Government spies would have been hard pressed to measure the degree of anger that simmered beneath the surface, for superficially all was high spirits. But that is the way of rural folk: they are by nature cheerful and friendly, and not given to the display of ugly feelings.

The atmosphere was set on the special train which bore us into Paddington. The two-way fare of £10 was less than half the cheapest normal return; no one bothered with tedious formalities such as asking for tickets, and the bar was open throughout the journey.

Farmers tend to talk loudly at all times; if you're competing with the roar of a tractor or the bellowing of cows, you have to. So, on the train, the noise level was phenomenal, and an extraordinary contrast with the normal commuter hush. Fuelled by natural exuberance, by cans of lager, and perhaps also by apprehension about crossing the urban jungle ahead, repartee crackled at shattering volume.

The travel arrangements made by the Countryside Alliance were admirable. On the train, stewards handed out tube tickets at £1 apiece. At Paddington marshals met us and shovelled the horde down the maw of the Bakerloo Line, where we packed on to a train for Charing Cross.

The next part of the journey demanded patience, for the Underground system was stretched to its limits, and we repeatedly squealed to a halt. When the driver broadcast apologies about repair work on the line ahead, we began to suspect that this was some filthy urban plot to stop us reaching our destination in time.

In the end, regaining fresh air, we were herded eastwards along the Strand, away from our ultimate objective, Hyde Park. Down alleyways and side streets to our right, we could see the main column inching in the opposite direction along the Victoria Embankment, but not until we reached the Temple were we allowed to go down and join it.

Only then did we realise what a colossal gathering this was. Such was the mass of people, 40 or 50 abreast, that we could only creep forward, and it took more than an hour to reach the official start line at the bottom of Northumberland Avenue, barely three-quarters of a mile ahead.

Nobody seemed to resent the delay. On the contrary, violent Mexican waves of yells and horn-blasts surged up and down the column. It was impossible to discern what started each outburst, but if one of them caught you under a bridge, the noise was deafening.

When we crossed Trafalgar Square and entered the wide open spaces of Pall Mall, the pace picked up. Then at last it was possible to move freely, and to enjoy the sensation of walking along famous thoroughfares without a vehicle in sight. With the noise, smell and threat of traffic removed, the buildings on either hand looked twice as fine.

In St James's and Piccadilly the balconies of gentlemen's clubs – Brooks's, White's, the In and Out, the Cavalry – were thronged with punters who had done themselves nobly at lunch. Their shouts of encouragement set off fresh Mexican waves, which swept the marchers forward. The sight of Piccadilly, packed solid with people from the Ritz to Hyde Park Corner, was in itself something never to be forgotten.

So at last we tramped along the north shore of the Serpentine, with a fresh breeze blowing off the water, to pass under the banner at the finish and disperse towards our far-flung homes. Before the event I had feared that, without any speeches or ceremony, the march might end in anticlimax. On the day, the opposite was true: I felt a sense of achievement, of a job well done.

The most striking feature was the mixture of high spirits and calm that everyone displayed. But appearances deceived: it was a variety of deep-seated worries that had brought about the invasion of London. As always, the fox-hunting fraternity were the most vociferous, but thousands of farmers who had never hunted in their lives were demonstrating anxiety about the collapse of their incomes. Landowners by the hundred had come because they were alarmed by the threat of the right to roam.

I myself, if challenged as to my motives, would have cited uncontrolled house-building as one of the most insidious dangers. In Gloucestershire we have repeatedly been told that 53,000 new houses will be needed by the year 2011; yet detailed examination has shown the figures on which these predictions are based to be absolute rubbish.

Will the Government now, for God's sake, pay attention to the message from the land? With the exception of children hauled into line by their parents, I think every one of the 285,000 felt that we must make a stand, so that idleness, ignorance, prejudice and political correctness in Westminster do not destroy the traditions and appearance of our beloved countryside for ever.

NATURE NOTE

The first flopsy bunnies of the season are appearing along the hedgerows – and no sooner do most of them show above ground, at the age of a few weeks, than they are killed and eaten by predators: foxes, cats, stoats, weasels, and buzzards move in on the new hatch with relish. Such is the carnage in early spring that it often looks as though rabbits are going to be wiped out. Yet females are astonishingly prolific. After a gestation period of only 30 days, they produce up to half a dozen young, then quickly mate again and continue the cycle. With the young themselves able to breed at the age of three-and-half months, the summer population builds at an amazing rate.

It is this extreme fecundity that makes rabbits such a menace to agriculture. Until the arrival of myxomatosis, in the Fifties, farmers suffered heavy losses to crops. Then the disease wiped out 95 per cent of the population, and numbers have never recovered to their previous level. Nowadays myxomatosis, which is borne by fleas, generally breaks out in late summer and carries off a high proportion of the rabbit population, but a certain number appear to be immune, and survive.

Duff Hart-Davis



WHAT, WHEN, WHERE

If you happen to be peering through the country's largest optical telescope on 13 March, and spot a greenish disc floating in the sky, rest assured that it is probably the planet Uranus, and not a UFO. It was on 13 March 1781 that William Herschel, a musician and astronomer living in Bath, first discovered this planet using a small, home-made telescope. If you want to know more about William, meet his sister and helpmate Caroline (aka the actress Miriam Dooley) at the Old Royal Observatory in Greenwich ...

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Ups and downs: the white isolation of a ski safari through Switzerland

Photographs: Jane Slade

There is nothing more intoxicating than the experience of skiing in the wilderness, as **Jane Slade** discovered on a mountain safari

The call of the wild

Andermatt was not a pretty sight. This was the meeting-point for a ski-touring adventure, which was to last six days and take us – a group of six – over big mountains and deep valleys, via the elegance of the Swiss resort of Klosters. Lovely though the area is, the weather cast a black cloud on the proceedings.

Jimmy, our guide, was pessimistic. "I think tomorrow will be pretty bad too," he said, as we nervously prepared ourselves for the trek. He loaded our powder skis, skins, avalanche bleepers and airbags into the van. Our group – I was the only woman in the party – included two Scottish doctors, both called Iain, a German medic from the Black Forest, a banker from Zug and an architect from Frankfurt.

Visibility was nil. It was cold. Very cold. The lifts to the mountain top were closed, so we put our skins on to our skis and legged it up the piste in minus 20 degrees and blizzard conditions. On we went for two-and-a-half hours, until through my fogged goggles I could just make out smoke curling from the chimney of a refuge. I had never been so pleased to see the bright red Swiss flag. The couple who ran this gentrified shed were the only people who remained in the mountain village during winter.

In the refuge we defrosted on warm local wine, and tucked into melted cheese and played a strange game of table croquet which had us transfixed until about 1am. The jovial banter in English, German and Swiss German soon gave way to loud, boisterous singing and the arrival of some unusually potent coffee.

Next day, still in the driving snow, we slogged up to 2,843m and had our reward: an hour later we were bouncing down a 1,000m vertical drop of fresh powder snow all the way to the railway station at Bitziruti. The trek had been worth it, all the more so because the fat powder skis made me feel as if I were floating on a pair of blow-up dinghies.

More uphill trekking, then more skiing in feather powder through the trees, travelling on and through a desert of white isolation.

The snowfall over the past two days had been tremendous, the effect of which we were about to witness. Great slabs thundered down a slope some 50m from where we stood, and were crushed into all-too-familiar minced rubble. It all happened very slowly, but the huge weight of the slide would not have spared a single skier.

Now we were getting technical. Some of the lads were having problems remaining upright on their ordinary skis, while Jimmy and I had cruised through the fluff like butter.

"Get sailing, boys, and go for the boats," I advised. The next day Big Iain and Black Forest Martin converted. Then there were the skins, which we had to attach to the underside of the skis when we went uphill. It took all my strength to separate them, and just as I teased them apart, a gust of wind would blow them back together again. I also had great trouble making right-angle turns going uphill without my heels being attached to bindings, as they are on downhill skis.

But all this hard work has its reward. We would find ourselves at the top of a peak which earlier had seemed dauntingly far off, and in front there would be virgin powder fields as far as the eye could see. Jimmy would bolt off towards the horizon, bouncing and tallyhoing for a full three minutes before coming to rest as a dot in the distance. He said he had never known such fantastic conditions, and in late March, too; the wonderful snow also meant that we didn't have to do the one-hour walk out at the bottom of the slopes.

Jimmy had the nice habit of congratulating everyone after a "hike", which usually involved much back-slapping, hand-shaking and, in my case, cheek-kissing and hugging followed by a ritual swig of tepid, sweet tea from his flask. He also had the unnerving, but endearing, habit of stretching out his arms and bursting into a rendition of "Always look on the bright side of life", which he sang as he danced like a demented puppet down the mountain.

Spring had made an appearance. The bleak midwinter of the first day now seemed a distant nightmare. The clouds had kept their distance, and we were touring in T-shirts, in glorious sunshine. Once up and over, we completed the last leg on skins; it was fairly steep and crusty, after being melted by the sun. Then it was hugs all round, and lashings of tepid tea.

The climb was well worth it, and the prize, an amphitheatre of mountain peaks. We could even see Mont Blanc and the Matterhorn.

Once again our guide donned his fresh track crown and led us through powder field upon powder field all the way down to Bristen in the valley, where a Land Rover met us and took us, tired and triumphant, back to Andermatt and a celebratory drink. Or two.

Jane Slade paid £582 for the Safari ski week with Alpine Adventures, which included half-board accommodation. Allow an extra £100 for lift passes and ground transport. Flights are excluded.

The nearest airport to Andermatt is Zurich (two hours by train). Make sure you can get off at Goschenen, and then take the mountain cog train, the Lurke Oberald Bah, up to Andermatt (15 minutes). A full-price return train ticket Zurich-Andermatt costs about SFr75. For brochure and further information, contact Alpine Adventures Mountain Reality, Post Box CH-6490, Andermatt, Switzerland (0041 41 872 0900; fax: 0041 41 872 0950).

There are still deep snow skiing weeks available in Andermatt, from 15 and 23 March, price SFr1,410 (excluding flights), and from Ski Touring in Bivio from 22 March for seven nights, price SFr1,085.

E-mail: bergschule.uri@mail.tic.ch.

SKI TIP

To improve your ability to balance on steeper slopes ski with your hands below your hips and in front of your thighs. This will allow you to turn your legs more powerfully and to absorb bumps and difficult terrain.

Chris Exall

All set for a day of sun and powder snow

If I can get in 12 hours' skiing, thought **Cathy Packe**, £160 is a small price to pay for a day trip to Switzerland. But time is of the essence, and this trip was no Swiss watch ...

My ski flight last Sunday was rather different from the usual charters. For a start, it was a scheduled Swissair flight, so only a few passengers were destined for a day trip to the resort of Engelberg. I identified two fellow travellers; each had a boot bag, and no other luggage. I ruled out another couple, as the woman was carrying that non-skiing accessory, a handbag, but when we got to Zurich they were waiting to get on the transfer bus.

The plane had arrived 10 minutes early. As it turned out, this was the only thing that went according to plan; the rest of the day proceeded in a manner perhaps more typical of the Italians than the Swiss.

We had received few instructions, but had been told to look out for someone from the Central Swiss Tourist Board in the arrivals hall. There was no one to be seen. The information desk couldn't help. Eventually, a bus driver was found: he was non-English-speaking, and unable to explain why we were not setting off straightaway. It emerged that we had to wait for another group from the Manchester flight. They, too, arrived early, and by 9.45am 15 of us were waiting expectantly in an over-large bus, ready to go. The driver had other plans. He thought someone was missing, and decided we should wait. Finally, at 10am, after one of the passengers had taken control and checked the driver's list of names, we set off for Engelberg.

Those of us who had been told we would be in the resort by 10.30am were disappointed. The journey took an hour an a half, through some dreary Zurich suburbs, around the edge of Lucerne, and into the mountains. Eventually the bus started to climb upwards round a series of hairpin bends, and we had our first sight of a snow-covered mountainside. When we reached the resort, we were to be dropped off at the ski rental shop, where we were to pick up a lift pass, a map and our equipment – all included in the price of the tour. Engelberg is full of ski rental shops, and our driver dropped us at the wrong one. No one seemed surprised.

We had to leave by 4.30pm, to get the Manchester passengers back for their flight. By now it was after midday; so much for the six hours in the resort that we had been promised. Still without piste maps, we set off down the street, to wait for the bus to get to the cable car to go up the mountain. It was 12.30pm by the time I had put my skis on and pointed them downhill.

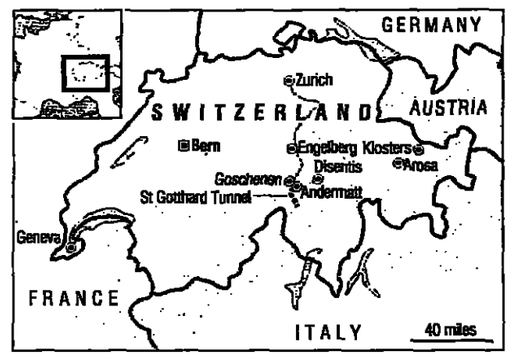
Engelberg is a fairly small, quite manageable resort on the side of the Titlis mountain. Ascent to the top is by three cable cars; at the half-way point there is a drag lift across a lake, the Trubsee, where a chair lift takes you to the base of another mountain.

Last Sunday, because of bad weather, the final cable car was open only to non-skiers, who wanted to enjoy the view from the restaurant. Unfortunately, the clouds were so low that it wasn't possible to see the cables on the car, let alone the mountains.

Because of the lift closure, the resort's two black runs were inaccessible. A selection of red runs zigzag down to the lake, and from there various reds and blues snake down towards the village. Although the map looked clear enough, the pistes themselves were badly signposted, making it almost impossible for anyone not familiar with the resort to find their way around.

With only four hours available for skiing, it might have been a good idea to forgo lunch, but a restaurant at every lift junction proved too much temptation. They were all fairly small and cheerful, with a lively atmosphere, and they had a selection of Swiss dishes as well as the usual soups and sandwiches. There are several bars and restaurants down in the village, too, which looked inviting: ideal for a spot of *après-ski*. Instead, at the end of the afternoon we had to get straight back into the bus, to head for the delights of three hours at Zurich airport.

On the journey back we exchanged notes. Several people said they didn't have time this year to ski for a week, so this seemed a good alternative. We all agreed that it was a bargain for what it offered – the flight alone would normally cost £360.50. But there was a unanimous feeling that the organisers didn't quite get it right. Why, for example, not provide two buses to accommodate the different timings of the London and Manchester flights? And why not send a representative of the tourist office – or an English-speaking driver – to meet us and explain what was on offer in the resort?



Spending a day in the mountains is relaxing, if only because you are so far away from normal life. The flights leave early enough, and return late enough, to give you 12 hours in Switzerland, which should leave more than enough time for a really good day's skiing – and this makes the idea of a day trip extremely appealing. But on Sunday most of us were left with the impression that it hadn't gone as smoothly as it could have done; and until some of the hiccups are sorted out, I, for one, will not be tempted to try it again.

Fact file

The Switzerland Travel Centre (0171-734 4577) is running day trips from London, Heathrow and Manchester to Engelberg every Saturday and Sunday while there is still snow. The cost (£160 from London, £175 from Manchester) includes air fare, transfer to the resort, ski and boot hire, and a lift pass.

On the slopes: the weekend snow reports

Country/ resort		Snow depth, cm	Conditions	Runs	Weather	Last	Comments
ANDORRA:	Soldeu	40-100	good	varied	sun, 1C	23/2	good snow upper slopes, wearing lower down
AUSTRIA:	Kitzbuhel	0-77	fair	varied	snow, 4C	5/3	5cm of new snow; strong wind 45kph
	Obergurgl	30-130	good	varied	cloud, -2C	5/3	difficult skiing, mixed visibility
FRANCE:	Avoriaz	115-145	fair	varied	fine, -2C	4/3	improved piste skiing due to light snowfall
	Les 2 Alpes	50-280	good powder	fair	fine, 2C	5/3	fresh powder on upper slopes; much cooler
	Flaine	45-200	good powder	fair	sun, -2C	5/3	15cm fresh snow, much improved
ITALY:	Cortina	20-80	fair	varied	cloud, 6C	5/3	some fresh snow, but spring conditions
	Livigno	52-153	good	varied	fair, 3C	5/3	slight improvement, new snow this am
	Madonna di Campiglio	50-150	fair	heavy	fair, 7C	5/3	some good snow, but flat light most of day
SWITZERLAND:	Crans Montana	5-230	good	varied	fine, 2C	5/3	new snow above 1,800m; great skiing
	Klosters	0-105	fair	heavy	fair, sun, 4C	5/3	wind-blown snow causing tricky conditions
	St Moritz	20-90	fair	moguls	fair, wind, 0C	5/3	windy, variable visibility; some good skiing
	Wengen	5-40	hard	closed	fair, 4C	5/3	mixed conditions, refrozen base; new snow
US:	Aspen	140-145	good powder	good	fair, -7C	4/3	excellent skiing in all areas
	Crested Butte	140-168	good powder	good	cloud, -7C	5/3	excellent everywhere
	Deer Valley/ Park City	248-250	good powder	good	fair, -8C	4/3	everything open, excellent skiing

Reports dated 5 March, supplied by Ski Club GB/ Data Management, www.offworld.net

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INTO96

Sermons in stones

The classic Japanese garden relies on stone and water. **Naila Green** describes a centuries-old tradition of design

There may seem to be little or no connection between gardening and opera, but David Freeman's recent production of *Madam Butterfly* left me feeling horticulturally inspired. I was lured to see a performance by the promise of "an enchanting Japanese water garden" and further interested by the fact that this also transforms itself into a Zen Buddhist stone garden.

Water and stone feature strongly in Japanese gardens, with or without plants. They provide both contrast and balance, and the nature of each of them illustrates a concept essential to the design of the Japanese garden. Whereas stone represents the enduring and unchanging (the *yo*), water is its balance, and represents the constantly changing (the *in*). These opposites provide a balance.

The idea of *in* and *yo* is better known by its Chinese counterparts, yin and yang. It is central to oriental thought and art, and postulates that everything is balanced, and completed by, its opposite. Thus, night is balanced by day, strength is balanced by frailty and weakness, and masculinity is balanced by femininity.

In the garden, unity is achieved by the balancing of opposites. Solid forms are balanced with empty spaces, vertical forms with horizontal, movement with stillness, dark with light. Unlike people who work with traditional Western garden design, where symmetry is commonly used to achieve balance, Japanese gardeners use asymmetry with consummate skill and sensitivity.

Traditional Japanese water features are always naturalistic and irregular in shape. *In* and *yo* are achieved by the use of still water, in the form of reflective pools, and moving water in the form of winding streams. Stone has a special importance in the design of the Japanese garden, as shown by the fact that the earliest Japanese garden designers were *ishitate-so*, "priests who arrange stones".

In its various forms, stone can represent many different aspects of nature. Even water can be represented symbolically, in the *kare-sansui* or dry gardens, where lines raked on white sand represent the sea. In Shinto, the indigenous religion of Japan, spirits known as *kami* were thought to inhabit certain trees, rocks, mountains and waterfalls. This intimacy with nature is one of the strongest characteristics of the Japanese, and shows why rocks have been so important in their garden design.

In the garden, rocks form the basis on which the whole design depends. Most other elements in the garden change. Plants change as they grow, water changes as it moves, light and weather change, and even the people who use the garden change. The rocks, however, do not change.

The selection of each rock is crucial. Every stone is unique and its shape, texture and colour reveal its essence, mood and inner spirit. To aid selection, rocks were categorised into five main shapes. Tall, monolithic "body" stones would be used for dramatic effect, and usually placed at the back of a group. Low, vertical "soul" stones were placed towards the front of the group. Flat-topped horizontal "mind and body" stones were used to harmonise the rest and create a sense of tranquillity. "Arching" stones were placed to one side of the group and near the front, and the "reclining" stone, roughly the shape of a human figure lying on its side, was placed in the foreground.

Traditional Japanese style requires a search for stones whose natural shape suggests certain poetic ideas, or resembles nature in some way. Sometimes a stone would suggest the shape of an animal, or a natural feature such as a water cascade, which would be used in a dry garden. Stones are also used to build symbolic mountains and waterfalls, stream beds, lakes and islands, paths, stepping-stones and bridges. The shape of the stone can be used to suggest an island, promontory or mountain range. This type of representation should be sensitive, never over-elaborate or contrived. Stones with signs of erosion and weathering are preferred, and moss and lichen add patina, giving it added value, or *sabi*.

The arrangement is also considered in great detail. The *Sakuteiki*, an 11th-century treatise on gardening, and the world's earliest garden design handbook, advises that groups of two or more stones should be placed at important points in the garden. These can be symbolic stones. In general, stones should always be arranged in groups of odd numbers, unless you are making a group of two. If, for example, you have three stones to arrange, then you should make a group of two and one. Within the groups, stones must be of a different size but be in harmony with one another.

Whatever the arrangement or materials that are used, the traditional Japanese garden designer, the *niwashi*, aims to create a mood of tranquillity called *yugen*. Like an artist or musician, he does not imitate nature, but seeks to capture its mysterious and transcendental spirit.



Freeman's 'Madam Butterfly', where the harmony of a Japanese garden takes centre stage Photo: Laurie Lewis

WEEKEND WORK

Bulbs: split clumps of snowdrops and aconites as they finish flowering and replant the bulbs with a handful of bonemeal to encourage them. Snowdrops look particularly good in ivy. Aconites flourish in the sort of starved grass you get under deciduous trees. Summer-flowering bulbs should be planted as soon as possible. Peter Nyssen, of Railway Road, Urmston, Manchester M41 0WX (0161-748 6666) is offering 10 nerines for £2 (plus VAT) and 100 acidanthera for £4 (plus VAT). J Walkers Bulbs of Washway House Farm, Holbeach, Spalding, Lincs PE12 7PP (01406 426216) has a new lily catalogue, five 'Citronella' for £5.75 and five top-size 'Regale' for £6.

Roses: many roses have not lost their foliage at all this winter, which makes pruning seem more daunting, but if you have not already tackled them, do it immediately. Start by cutting out dead wood, then all spindly stems and suckers. That will be enough for old-fashioned roses. Hybrid teas need sterner treatment: follow each stem up from the bottom until you come to a likely looking outward-facing bud and cut the stem off above the bud. That is the tidy way. The quick way is to shear over the top of HT roses with a hedge-clipper.

Box: tired box hedges can be boosted with a dressing of general fertiliser, such as Growmore or Vitax Q4. Use roughly two ounces for every yard of hedge. If box hedges have got hideously leggy, try cutting them back hard, leaving no more than 4-5ins of stem. Feed when they show signs of resprouting. They may not. Box is not so forgiving as yew.

Shrubs: cut to the ground shrubs such as rubus. Shear off the old foliage of periwinkle to make way for new shoots now springing up through the dross.

Anna Pavord

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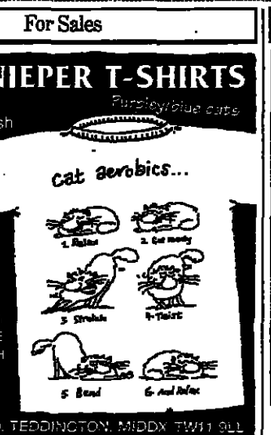
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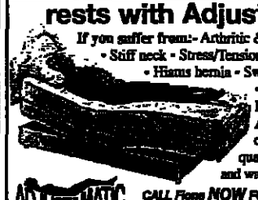
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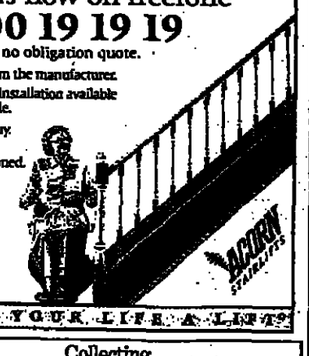
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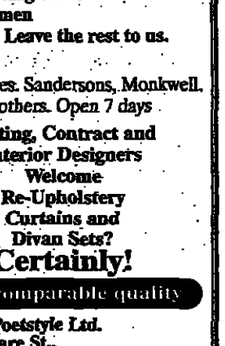
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Between the leaves

From Wagnerian orchids to heaps of hellebores, mountains of monardas and more, **Anna Pavord** takes a tour around this year's crop of garden guides



Flower Oriental Hellebore
Photograph: Planet Earth

On holiday in the Windward Islands a few years ago, I spent a day weeding amongst orchids and bromeliads on an old grapefruit plantation high in the centre of Dominica. "Weeding" here took on a different character. I was cutting down ferns and morning glories that I would have been fussing over as if they were babies, if ever I could have persuaded them to grow at home.

Looking out over that garden, only two plants were familiar: a buddleia (an object of great curiosity in Dominica) and a camellia, both in bloom. The camellia's flowers, which to us seem so theatrical, were upstaged. Bent under the weight of the orchids growing on its mossy branches, it was a soprano trilling a solitary lieder while everything else was thundering in a Wagnerian chorus.

Bromeliads were the boss plants in this garden. Some grew along the branches of the old grapefruit trees. Others were planted on the ground, between tall stands of anthuriums and arrow-leaved aroids. Many were in flower: startling spikes of coral and purple, or shocking pink and mauve. Some looked like huge insects: flattened, fleshy cockroaches, or a preying mantis leering out of a nest of leaves. Where we might use wisteria, along the front of the verandah, there was a jade vine with three-foot racemes of flowers in an improbable shade of turquoise. Each hanging rope of flowers had its own attendant hummingbird.

Even the simplest tasks were different there. Weeding involved not pulling but cutting. The skim of soil was too precious to dislodge, too vulnerable to expose to the torrential thunderstorms. The chief culprit was a graceful fern that grew wild over all the cooler, damper parts of the island. In the matrix of its roots, bromeliads could get a hold, but the fern was always trying to swamp the newcomers.

Reading a newly published guide, *The Gardens of Dominica* (Papillote Press, £7.99), I felt desperately homesick. That's because the guide itself is so sympathetically and vividly written by Polly Pattullo, a specialist in Caribbean affairs, and Anne Jno Baptiste, an American-born Dominican who has a beautiful garden at the Papillote Wilderness Retreat in Dominica.

This is the first guide to the gardens of the island and, as you'd expect, it tells you where to go, what you'll see and how to get there. But the introduction does much more: it gives a historic perspective to the way the island is gardened. It tells of the successive waves of colonisers who drove the indigenous Caribs, growers of cassava, sweet potato and soursop, into the remoter areas of the island. It explains how French gardening traditions were followed by English practices, and how they in turn were overlaid by the crops and growing skills of the entrepreneurial black Africans. Many were brought to Dominica to work as slaves on the 18th-century sugar plantations.

All this is part of our gardening history, too. Even if the prospect of a visit to Dominica is as unlikely as a kind word from your bank manager, this is a must-have book. It is richly evocative and knowledgeable, and highlights places that no visitor could find on his own. Only the most detailed local knowledge can produce a guide as good as this.

In Britain, we take good garden guides for granted, forgetting what a luxury they are.

GREEN SLEEVES

Also available: 'Gardens of Scotland' (Scotland's Gardens Scheme, £3); 'The Hidden Gardens of Ireland' by Marianne Heron (Gill & Macmillan, £7.99); 'The Good Gardens Guide' edited by Peter King (Ebury Press, £14.99); 'Gardener's Guide to Britain and Ireland' by Patrick Taylor (Dorling Kindersley, £12.99).

The new yellow book, *Gardens of England and Wales Open for Charity* (National Gardens Scheme, £4.50), has just been published, with details of 3,500 gardens open between now and November. New this year are maps, marking the gardens in each area, which is a huge bonus.

This is a directory, rather than a guide. Entries are written by the owners themselves, and I confess I am always drawn to gardens that sound slightly ramshackle and chaotic, rather than to those whose owners are sure beyond any reasonable doubt that their creations "will give inspiration to anyone wishing to develop a similar plot". As the visitor, I feel that inspiration-quotient should be my decision, not theirs. The range of gardens is extraordinary. Tomorrow you could visit the Shorts' garden at Longthatch, Warnford, in Hampshire which has part of the national collection of hellebores (open 2pm-5pm, admission £2). Or you could see the fantastic restoration of the Waddesden Dairy water garden in Buckinghamshire, carried out by Julian and Isabel Bannerman for Lord Rothschild (open 2pm-5pm, admission £1). Or you could race to Devon, where spring is already well on its way, to catch up on the Herberts' tranquil garden at Yonder Hill, Colaton Raleigh (open 2pm-5pm, admission £1).

Make a weekend of it, with a copy of Sue Colquhoun's *Bed and Breakfast for Garden Lovers* in your bag. The list highlights places to stay where your host won't mind you jabbering about pulmonarias or letting your soup get cold while you speak your mind about monardas. Under each entry is a list of gardens to visit close by. You might make your way to the Burnhams' house, Westcott Barton in Devon, a place so old it's listed in Domesday Book. Ann Burnham is a new but enthusiastic gardener, and is close to Marwood Hill, Arlington Court and Tapeley Park.

The only book to combine a guide to gardens with suggestions of places to stay (all detailed on OS maps) is Judith Hitching's *A Guide To Garden Visits* (Michael Joseph £12.99). She even includes diversions for wet weather. Ms Hitching is a keen gardener, runs her own B&B at Gower's Close, Sibford Gower, near Banbury, Oxfordshire, and is an awesome cook. If the lily needs gilding, this is the way to do it. While you are ambling through Frank and Marjorie Lawleys' phenomenal garden at Herterton House, near Morpeth, you can be dreaming of dinner at Callaly Mains (01665 574665).

Buy 'The Gardens of Dominica' (£7.99, plus 70p postage and packing) from the Papillote Press, 23 Rozel Road, London SW4 0EY (0171-720 5983). For a copy of the B&B Guide for Garden Lovers', send four first-class stamps and sae (11cm x 22cm) to Sue Colquhoun, Handywater Farm, Sibford Gower, Banbury, Oxfordshire OX15 5AE (fax: 01295 780990).

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Antiques while you wait

The stuff of ... well-made reproduction furniture. **Sally Staples** reports

If you yearn to fill your home with antiques, but would need a lottery win to achieve the ambition, it is worth taking a trip to a 16th-century, timber-framed building in the heart of West Sussex called the Oak Apple Trading Company.

Inside this former restaurant and wine bar three floors are packed top to bottom with country furniture that is made – and aged – to order. Such is the skill of the makers that the hand-polished oak tables, pine chests and cherry-wood four-posters could pass for the real thing under the scrutiny of any amateur eye.

The owner, Philip Jones, also stocks some genuine antiques and a mass of curious objects that take his fancy on the frequent trawls he makes round the country to keep the shop fully stocked.

A cast bronze boar bears a £695 price tag. A pair of hand-made resin icons stand beside a lampstand (£47.95) that has been converted from an Indian wooden tribal pot used in Himalayan villages to store oil and crops. A dragon from Bali graces the window, and a locally hand-carved rocking-horse with waxed finish is on sale for £895.

Hungarian pine glazed dressers with spice drawers (£895-£1,495) are popular with buyers wanting to furnish large country kitchens. Children's hand-painted toy chests sell for £195-£265.

Jones also stocks some unusual wrought-iron work, such as a 3ft-long rack with hooks, decorated with figures of a hound, a pheasant, a stag and a hare. It costs £89.50, and can be used to hang coats, kitchen utensils or even game.

There are animal bronzes and carved wooden animals, and a wide range of pottery and découpage. This is the perfect place to find an unusual wedding present for a couple whose previous marriages have supplied them with a houseful of basics.

Jones buys both what appeals to him and what sells, and he is aware that some of his stock can appear naff. There is a steady demand for his comprehensive range of dummy book fronts, made from resin and designed to look antique. Behind the artificially faded lettering of *Goldsmith's Works* or *The Waverley Novels* are cases to store CDs, cassettes and videos. And old bread bins, hand-painted and glazed to match the colour range of Aga stoves, sell at between £60 and £95.

The copy of the 17th-century four-poster, available in oak or cherry-wood, seems a snip at £3,975, although delivery can take up to four months. An old-looking panelled chest with drawers (price £2,575) is revealed to be a TV cabinet operated by an electric switch.

Oak Apple Trading Company, Golden Square, Petworth, West Sussex GU28 OAP (01798-342576). Mon-Sat 9.30am-5pm.



JOHN VOOS

Follow your nose to India

The taste of ... cardamom, that sweet and suddenly fashionable spice. By **Nikki Spencer**

You don't have to go far to find cardamom in the state of Kerala, in the south-western tip of India; you just follow your nose.

The pungent spice grows wild in the rich, moist soil of the Cardamom Hills, around Thekkady and Kumily, where you can smell from afar the cardamom auction in the market-place. Check into a hotel such as the trendy, eco-conscious Spice Village, and you'll find the thatched huts and pool surrounded by cardamom bushes.

Although Guatemala now exports more, Indian cardamom is still deemed to be superior in aroma and taste. It is produced on plantations mainly in the three southern states of Karnatakan, Kerala and Tamil Nadu; it is the pods from Kerala that set the benchmark world-wide for both price and quality.

Harvesting takes place between September and November, just before the fruit are ripe. The pods are dried on open platforms under the sun for four to five days, or in modern kilns and curing plants, which takes a mere 48 hours.

Cardamom is the third most expensive spice in the world (after saffron and vanilla), which may come as a surprise to people who were unaware of its existence until it started to crop up in fashionable recipes.

Green cardamom (the black variety is bigger, stronger and something else altogether) is stocked by most supermarkets, but it can be a little overwhelming. Cardamom can be added to curry dishes, and even to tea.

Cardamom days

● Spice Village is one of a number of places to stay in the Cardamom Hills, listed in *The Rough Guide To India* (Penguin £14.99). It is also featured in the *Cape Travel Company's* brochure on Kerala (0181-943 4067).

● For a taste of Kerala, the award-winning Indian restaurant, Chutney Mary, 535 King's Road, SW10 (0171-351 3113) is offering a special menu until 12 April.

● The Wiltshire-based food company Hill Station has launched cardamom ice-cream, price £3.95 from Harrods and specialist delis (01249 816596 for stockists).

Uses for cardamom

Cardamom crops up in both sweet and savoury recipes.

● In Germany it is added to some pungent sausages, and used in roll-mop herring marinades.

● The Swedish use it as a flavouring for buns, cakes and milk puddings.

● In the Middle East it is added to strong black coffee. In fact prices on the world market fell dramatically in 1991 due to the lack of demand from the Middle East following the Gulf War.

● Cardamom is said to have medicinal qualities. The Spice Board of India lists remedies for stomach ailments and sore throats, and quotes an elderly lady as saying "For the past 65 years I've been eating cardamom mixed with honey at least once daily ... I'm 80 now, I read without glasses, I walk without a stick and I am disgustingly healthy."

GAMES

STATISTICALLY INSIGNIFICANT
WILLIAM HARTSTON

With two months of 1998 now behind us, our newspaper database has accumulated enough evidence to compare the New Labour year with its predecessor. The table on the right shows the number of articles containing selected words that appeared in a cross-section of the national press in the first two months of 1998, and compares the figure for each word with its score in the same two months of 1997. The differences – highly marked in many cases – provide increasing evidence of the nature of the pre-millennial tension affecting us all.

First, we need only look at the scores for "millennium" itself, and its misspelt relation "millenium". The total number of references has more than doubled. While the misspelt version registers an increase of 42 per cent, it is more significant that the rate of misspelling has dropped from 5.9 per cent in 1997 to 4.0 per cent this year. Nevertheless, we cannot help but regret that Mr Mandelson (up a startling 455 per cent himself) did not opt for an underlined double-N as the millennium logo rather than a single M.

The rise in Mandelsons easily outstrips that of Jack Straws, though Fayeds have clearly improved more than either. The biggest rise, however, is that of Saddam, who may even claim some credit for the rapid rise in "anthrax".

Curiously, even if we add together the rises in Mandelson, Fayed, Saddam and Jack Straw, they still fall well short, in raw terms, of the decline in occurrences of John Major.

The female name of the year is clearly Monica (413 per cent up), which is a bigger rise even than "oral sex" which knelt so neatly at 69 in last year's list. The more demotic expression "blow job" also performed better than last year.

Two new entrants have made a considerable impression.. El Niño has appeared from nowhere and managed to overtake such an old favourite as CJD. Even more surprisingly, however, the Teletubbies are ahead of anthrax. While the doubling of CJD shows that the beef scare is far from over, it is interesting to note that it still made less than half the impression of anthrax.

The table argues against recent predictions of the demise of the Spice Girls: they are well up on last year. Oasis, on the other hand, are the most stable of all words and expressions surveyed.

Word	*Jan-Feb 97*	*Jan-Feb 98*	*% change*
Anthrax	11	249	+2,164
Blow job	3	13	+333
CJD	57	116	+104
El Niño	0	139	∞
Fayed	88	556	+532
Jack Straw	262	841	+121
John Major	7,573	567	-93
Mandelson	132	732	+455
Millenium	65	92	+42
Millennium	1,028	2,217	+116
Monica	193	990	+413
Oasis	683	732	+7
Oral sex	69	188	+172
Saddam	99	1,440	+1,355
Sleaze	218	329	+51
Spice girls	650	895	+38
Teletubbies	0	255	∞

Finally, we come to "sleaze". Hopes that the new government would put an end to it have sadly not materialised. For all the sleaze under the Tories, 1998 sleaze is still running 51 per cent higher.

PANDORA MELLY
GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

Isabel Colegate, 66, writer

I may occasionally play a slow game of tennis on a grass court if the sun is shining and the opportunity arises. Otherwise I'm not much of a game-player. I'd rather read a book, go for a walk, or have a conversation.

I'm too defeatist for competitive games. Not that I like losing – I just always do. I know how to play bridge, but I get bad cards, which is annoying for any partner. Besides, bridge tends to go on far too long – like most games.

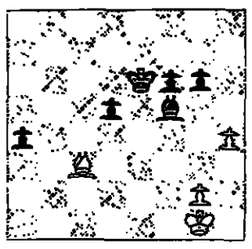
When I was a child we played consequences, or Lexicon, which was a precursor of Scrabble. Then there was Monopoly, but my eldest sister usually won, and my third sister always cried. We were happier when we sailed small boats together – which we continued to do after we had all grown up, but I suppose that's a sport, not a game.

I like watching *University Challenge* on television – that is a sort of game, isn't it? – and shouting out the answers, right or wrong. Although generally speaking I don't like clever games any more than stupid ones. I'd have been miserable in Edwardian country house society, where they did nothing but play games of one sort or another.

You could say that story-telling is a game, and I've spent my life doing that. I dread to think what would happen if all my worries didn't from time to time coalesce and turn themselves into a story; I'd go mad I suppose. On the other hand, story-telling is only half a game. It's also intimately related to reality – or at least it's a bore if it's not. So for me, whether as reader or writer, it's much more than a game. But I suppose a real addict could say that about dominoes.

The film of Isabel Colegate's 'The Shooting Party' is available on video. Her latest novel, 'Winter Journey' costs £6.99 in Penguin paperback.

CHESS: WILLIAM HARTSTON



You are Black in the diagram position and it's your move. Two pawns ahead, you clearly have good winning prospects, but the opposite-coloured bishops give White hopes of salvation. After routine play such as 1...a3 2.Kf2 a2 3.Ke3 Black will be hard-pressed ever to make progress. Equally, after 1...Be4 2.Kf2 f5 3.g3 Kd6 4.Ke3, White is able to set up a black-square blockade of the passed pawns.

The position arose at the end of the Topalov-Shirov game in the 10th round at Linares and Shirov found a remarkable way to force a victory. Just take a moment to think about possible plans for Black in the diagram, then compare your ideas with the way Shirov handled it.

He began with 1...Bh3!! Even if Black does have other ways to win, this is certainly the classy way to do it. The idea is to attack the pawn on g2 without blocking the black king's path to f5 and e4. The game continued 2.gxh3 (2.g3 Kf5 3.Kf2 Ke4 is no better) 2...Kf5 3.Kf2 Ke4! 4.Bxf6 d4 (The point: the bishop is cut off from defending a1) 5.Be7 Kd3! 6.Bc5 Kc4 7.Be7 Kb3 and White resigned. After 8.Ke1 Kc2 9.Bc5 d3 10.Bb4 a3 he cannot stop both pawns.

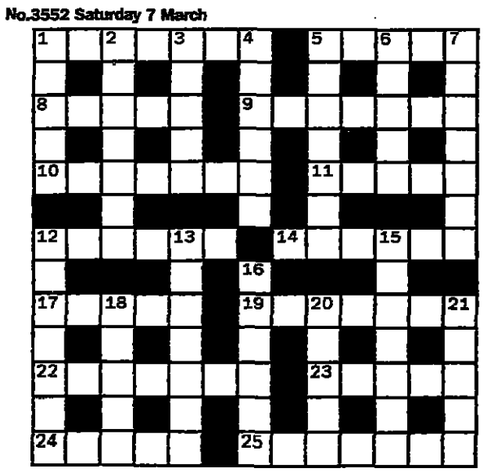
Here are the full moves. Black's opening play was not totally convincing, but he took advantage of White's decision to push forward too quickly on the K-side. 24...Nb6 followed by Nd5 and Nb4 may have looked odd, as it rerouted the knight from an apparently good square, but it was the right way to take the sting out of White's attack.

White: Veselin Topalov
Black: Alexei Shirov

1	d4	Nf6	
2	c4	g6	
3	Nc3	d5	
4	cxd5	Nxd5	
5	e4	Nxc3	
6	bxc3	Bg7	
7	Bb5+	c6	
8	Ba4	0-0	
9	Ne2	Nd7	
10	0-0	e5	
11	f3	Qe7	
12	Be3	Rd8	
13	Qc2	Nb6	
14	Bb3	Be6	
15	Rad1	Nc4	
16	Bc1	b5	
17	f4	exd4	
18	Nxd4	Bg4	
19	Rde1	Qc5	
20	Kh1	a5	
21	h3	Bd7	
22	a4	bxa4	
23	Ba2	Be8	
24	e5	Nb6	
25	f5	Nd5	
26	Bd2	Nb4	
27	Qxa4	Nxa2	
28	Qxa2	Bxe5	
29	fxg6	hxg6	
30	Bg5	Rd5	
31	Re3	Qd6	
32	Qe2	Bd7	
33	c4	Bxd4	
34	cxd5	Bxe3	
35	Qxe3	Re8	
36	Qc3	Qxd5	
37	Bh6	Re5	
38	Rf3	Qc5	
39	Qa1	Bf5	
40	Re3	f6	
41	Rxe5	Qxe5	
42	Qa2+	Qd5	
43	Qxd5+	cxd5	
44	Bd2	a4	
45	Bc3	Kf7	
46	h4	Ke6	
47	Kg1	Bh3	
48	gxh3	Kf5	
49	Kf2	Ke4	
50	Bxf6	d4	
51	Be7	Kd3	
52	Bc5	Kc4	
53	Be7	Kb3	White resigned

CONCISE CROSSWORD

No.3552 Saturday 7 March



ACROSS

1 Shown red card (4,3)
5 Grips (5)
8 Cart (5)
9 Opening (7)
10 Withdrawal (7)
11 Cheque beneficiary (5)
12 Sample (6)
14 Apt to speak sharply (6)
17 Small plot of land (5)
19 Unrealistic notion (7)
22 Of long duration (7)
23 Genuflected (5)
24 Knight's weapon (5)
25 Accounts examiner (7)

DOWN

1 Drain (5)
2 Cancels out (7)
3 Weight (5)
4 Chilly (6)
5 Sharp bend (7)
6 Church members other than clergy (5)
7 Stage set (7)
12 Characteristic (7)
13 Increase (7)
15 Excuse (7)
16 Flowering shrub (6)
18 Italian city (5)
20 Annoyed (5)
21 Performer (5)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:

ACROSS: 1 Probe, 4 Bosses (Proboscis), 9 Cabbage, 10 Donor, 11 Fate, 12 Carcass, 13 Rat, 14 Oboe, 16 Toss, 18 Eve, 20 Pro rata, 21 Opal, 24 Khaki, 25 Embassy, 26 Nether, 27 Steer. DOWN: 1 Pacify, 2 Orbit, 3 Exam, 5 Obdurate, 6 Sandals, 7 Stress, 8 React, 13 Relative, 15 Buoyant, 17 Spoken, 18 Eager, 19 Player, 22 Paste, 23 Ibis.

BRIDGE: ALAN HIRON

Love all; dealer South

North
♠J 10 6 4
♡J 10 8 2
◇6
♣K 10 6 2

West
♠7 5 2
♡9 6 4
◇J 10 9 4
♣7 5 3

East
♠A 8 3
♡A 5 3
◇8 7 5 2
♣A J 9

South
♠K Q 9
♡K Q 7
◇A K Q 3
♣Q 8 4

This deal first appeared many years ago as a problem for East: how should he defend to defeat Three No-trumps? Much later it reappeared, but this time the question was: how should South make Three No-trumps.

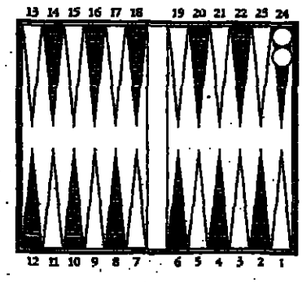
It is easy enough to construct sensible bidding: South opens Two No-trumps, North tries a Stayman Three Clubs without success and goes back to Three No-trumps against which West leads ◇J.

First the "official" solution: After winning the diamond lead, declarer plays ♣K, which wins, and ♣Q which also holds. With no sure entry to dummy, he tries the hearts, but again the king and queen are allowed to win. In desperation, South tries ♣Q, but East ducks for the fifth time and the defenders now come to five tricks.

Then came the counter-attack when it was pointed out that South could have got home by ducking the opening lead! He wins the diamond continuation and is allowed to make ♠K,Q and ♡K,Q as before, but now he cashes his three diamond winners and exits with either major suit, leaving East to open up the clubs after taking his other two aces.

The purist problemist will complain about this, however. There is an alternative solution: for South does not have to give up the first diamond trick; he can do this at any time while he still has a top diamond left.

BACKGAMMON: CHRIS BRAY



Several readers have asked for some guidance on doubling, so let's remind ourselves of the basic theory. If Player A doubles Player B then B can drop and pay one point, or accept the double and play on with the doubling cube on his side of the board. B needs 25 per cent winning chances to accept the double. Consider four games: If B drops the double in all four he will be minus four on the scoresheet; if he accepts, and wins one but loses three, then he will still be minus four on the scoresheet (losing six points but winning two). Thus winning one game in four is good enough for B to break even. The position above is the only one known where White has exactly 25 per cent winning chances – Black wins with 27 rolls of the dice but loses with 9, and thus White can either take or drop a double from Black.

So doubling is easy, right? You wait until you are 75 per cent to win the game, and then double. Your opponent can either take or drop, and you won't mind which. Sadly, real life isn't like that. You may be 55 per cent to win one roll, and by the next time you are on roll you might be 85 per cent to win. You will then double and your opponent will drop, but you will not have doubled at the optimal 75 per cent figure.

The other big factor is that if your opponent accepts the double, he now owns the cube and has the right to play the game to the end. He can also redouble you if his position becomes strong enough. This last factor is very significant.

Backgammon can be likened to a game of rugby. At the start both sides have a 50 per cent chance. If one side reaches the opponent's 25-yard line he will win with the doubling cube. However, if he doubles and the opponent accepts, then the doubling side must now reach the try line to win the game whilst the opponent need only reach the doubler's 25-yard line before he in turn can win with a redouble. This rates clearly the high value of cube ownership.

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Burning ambition

Yu quickly come to blows with the object o/your desire when you learn the art of siersmithing, as **Sally Staples** finds out

Ti cacophany of clattering hammers sods like the Seven Dwarfs setting off twork, or perhaps Father Christmas in hiworkshop tapping out toys by the mill. But once inside the studio, reality repes the fantasy. This is silversmithing inill clamour. A quick glance at the intse facial expressions is enough to undstand that the relationship between a hmerer and his piece of silver is deep a meaningful.

As Ian Collinson, pausing from perfing a silver tray, explains: "It's like makit love to metal. To achieve the hd-beaten look, that burnished finish, you he to make thousands of little regular bws – almost like kissing the metal. Once y lose concentration, then it's time to go al do something else for a while."

Ian's tray is the most ambitious item bei made on this particular five-day silvsmithing course at West Dean College Sussex, which provides a state-of-the-art wrkshop and skilled instruction from Irrick Grady, a professional silversmith.

The tray began life as a flat disc and a lg strip of silver, called a "wire", which h has patterned and soldered to the disc at will form the 10-inch base. The silver st him £319, and the tray is so heavy that he is worried that once he loads it with a bottle of wine and a few glasses he will find it hard to lift.

Ian, a retired chartered surveyor from Hertfordshire, is comparatively experienced at working with silver, and has his own workshop at home. His problem is how to achieve a flat, smooth surface for the base of the tray, because silver can buckle when heated.

The solution to this is patience, patience and more patience – plus a delicate combination of knowing how much to heat the metal base and how hard to hammer the tray's rim. Certainly it is an act of love.

Next to Ian sits Michael Soley, intent on hammering a piece of silver that looks like an ashtray. He began with a flat disc of silver about 4 millimetres thick and 60 millimetres across. It was curved on a raising anvil, and the beating process has begun that will ultimately convert the object into a tumbler cup.

"The idea is to spread the metal. You need to keep it thick in the middle and thick at the edge, and gradually it spreads and the cup shape grows up," says Michael. "The only thing that happens quickly in silverwork is mistakes. I work on the principle of brute force and ignorance.

"I've spent 30 years working with silver as a hobby, and I've come to this course at West Dean all the way from Cornwall because the tutor here is so marvellous. Derrick Grady has had the full apprenticeship, and can offer much more than an art school man."

If all this sounds daunting to a potential beginner, it should be made clear that Derrick also welcomes complete novices. Christine Bodger, an antiques dealer from Kent (she gets in a joke about her name before anyone else can) is just such a beginner, and says she was alarmed at the introductory meeting in the workshop on the first evening.

"We were shown these huge gas-and-air torches for heating the silver and this terrifying polisher. It was all very new to me and I thought I might set the place on fire, but I soon got used to it," she says, brandishing a torch with an 18-in flame to demonstrate the annealing process that occurs when silver is heated to make it more malleable.

Silverwork looks daunting but novices are welcome Andrew Hasson

Christine has been advised to start her silversmithing by making a tastevin or wine-tasting cup. All she has brought to the course is a small, square sheet of silver (costing about £2 per square inch). Tweezers, cutters and pliers have been lent by Derrick.

"First of all I drew a circle with a compass, and then cut the shape out of the silver square. Then I put the circle on to a small sandbag and hammered it with a blocking hammer. Then the metal was put on the raising anvil. Next comes the annealing process, when you put the silver into the flame until it is chalk white. If it goes red, it buckles. Then you cool it in water and put it into some pickling acid to clean." She rattles off the newly-learned process with the pleasure of a child learning tables.

Christine has also brought some damaged silverware along, and Derrick has shown her how to knock out dents and erase engraving – although he emphasises that the course is not strictly designed for repair work.

Slightly more experienced silversmiths are making paper knives, small boxes, bowls and shoehorns – and one woman is delighted with a simple but pleasing design of candelabra. Some of the students have built up their own collections of tools – a packet of a dozen needle files costs around £50 – but the workshop at West Dean boasts a vast array of tools in all shapes and sizes.

Small amounts of silver can be bought at the college, but Derrick recommends bullion suppliers for people who need more than 20 square inches. Although the course is not aimed at jewellery-making, more experienced silversmiths can experiment with their own designs. One student, who had made a chainmail-style silver bracelet at home, was working with Derrick on developing a technique for soldering the clasp.

The five-day silversmithing course at West Dean College costs from £373 for a full residential stay or £244 for non-residents (01243 811301). Derrick Grady also teaches at the Guild of Hull Silversmiths in Hull (01482-648044), where there is currently a waiting list.

n-line skates: the mechanical banana skin

s easy, it's quick to lam, and it gives veryone a good ugh. **Eric Kendall** *ets sliding*

aggering from park bench lamppost, who would lieve that they'd be gliding ng effortlessly, spinning on : spot and skating ckwards (intentionally) in rt to no time? Well, not the vice *in-line* skater, that's sure. The feeling is about secure as a Californian lside in a rainstorm. Going; unless you're eply ungifted, is no oblem – with weight well ward, almost anyone can idly move from a tentative ck-footed walk to a nfidence-boosting glide.

Cocky thoughts crowd in: "Who needs an instructor?", "Where's that game of hockey?" But it takes only an errant toddler, dog or ambling pedestrian to remind you how hard it is to stop without resorting to violence.

A degree of confidence comes quickly, though there can't be many activities where your self-image diverges so hugely from reality. It's a sorry sight: with all the stability of a bowling pin, you can be hit by a stomach-churning twitch or wobble long after you think you've mastered the basics. And the better you get, the faster you go and the more skin you lose when taking a close look at the ground.

Some recommend learning on carpet, for reasons of comfort and friction: if you fall it's fairly soft, and you're less likely to do so in the first place because the pile slows the wheels. Then a carpet is usually indoors, so you can't be rained on and no one can witness your humiliation. Less controversial, at least with carpet owners, is a dry patch of grass, which has roughly the same properties.

Once on Tarmac, you may feel powerless to prevent the skates running away with you, but that's better than being left behind, on your backside – the one part of your body that doesn't qualify for additional protective padding.

Because your feet stick out almost entirely forwards from the bottom of each leg, the tendency on skates is to go over backwards, especially when combined with a defensive "weight to the *back" stance – the main* problem for most beginners. In this respect, for the first few hours it feels as though you've glued banana skins to the soles of your shoes.

The side-splittingly funny side of in-line skating is possibly its most unexpected aspect. Your first excursion could leave your solar plexus more battered, from laughing long and hard, than any of your extremities will be from ground contact. With so many cool people on in-line skates, it's hard to believe there's even a hint of frivolity involved, but the effect of either experiencing or watching the one-man Mexican wave brought on by losing and saving your balance, then losing it again as you start to relax, can't fail to cheer you up. And as participants of most complicated activities know, the *schadenfreude* effect of *watching others almost come* a cropper increases in direct proportion to your risk of suffering the same fate. Also amusing, in a terrifying way, are small slopes. Up is fine and down would be too, but for a tendency to throw all your training out of the window the moment you pick up speed. All that's left to do is laugh.

As you clock up the miles, the rewards come more through getting it right than in the hilarity of getting it wrong. For fitness freaks (it's great physical training, with the bonus of honing balance and co-ordination), cornering at speed is a sensation that could wean you off ever doing anything else; for adrenaline and for anyone who has to thrash around after a ball at least once a week, hockey on wheels is fantastic and gets your skating abilities into a different orbit. For everyone *else who just weaves around* the park, it's probably the only time in your life you'll get away with dancing around in a public place, in broad daylight, with a Walkman on.

Where to start

In-line skates, like ice-skates, can be banked over through turns while keeping all the wheels in contact with the ground. The boot can be rigid, with ski-boot style clips; softer boots, some with removable blades, are also available. A brake is usually fitted to one skate, but the better you become the less you use it.

Wrist, elbow and knee-pads are essential when learning. Helmets are also recommended.

You can hire skates and protective gear from specialist sports shops; they may offer a discount if you then decide to buy your own. A reasonable pair of skates costs from £100, and pads from £30.

British In-line Skating Association 01869 321 410; British Federation of Roller Speed 0121-770 7589; British In-line Skating Hockey Association 01323 440 442. A video, 'Inside Edge', is available from sports shops.



On a roll: for the novice in-line skater, going is no problem. Stopping is more difficult to achieve without resorting to violence

Photograph: Penny Kendall

THE INDEPENDENT



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14/RACING

Doncaster

HYPERION

2.00 Potter's Gale **2.30 New Inn** **3.05 What's Your Story (nb)** **3.35 ANABRANCH (nap)** **4.10 Colonel In Chief** **4.40 Spirit Of Steel** **5.10 Belisario**

GOING: Soft.
●Left-hand, pear-shaped course.
●Course, is E of town off the A638 (M18 Jcts 3 & 4). Bus link from Doncaster Central station. **ADMISSION:** Club £15; Grandstand £9: Family Enclosure £3 (under-16s free all enclosures). **CAR PARK:** Free.
●**LEADING TRAINERS:** Mrs M Reveley 15-84 (17.9%), D Nicholson 10-51 (19.6%), O Sherwood 8-45 (17.8%), T Easterby 7-27 (25.9%), J FitzGerald 7-58 (12.1%).
●**LEADING JOCKEYS:** P Carberry 11-37 (29.7%), P Niven 11-69 (16.7%); L Wyer 10-61 (16.4%), R Garritty 6-52 (11.5%), A Maguire 5-21 (23.8%), N Williamson 4-25 (16%).
●**FAVOURITES:** 89-245 (36.3%).
BLINKERED FIRST TIME: None.

2.00 PARDUBICE NOVICE CHASE (CLASS D) £5,000 added 2m 110yds Penalty Value £3,527

1 641 THE MOOR (18) (D) (Miss D J Merson) M Tompkins 7 11 7 P Carberry
2 02 CABILLE (FR) (18) (Mrs L C Taylor) Mrs L Taylor 6 11 2 R Supple
3 05243P NON VINTAGE (14) (D) (Alan Mann) M Chapman 7 11 2 W Worthington
4 -1121U POTTER'S GALE (7) (D) (J E Potter) D Nicholson 7 11 2 A Maguire
– 4 declared –

BETTING: 8-11 Potter's Gale, 13-8 The Moor, 10-1 Non Vintage, 12-1 Cabille
1997 Sublime Fellow 7 11 12 J Osborne 2-1 (N Henderson) 7 ran

FORM GUIDE

The Moor, backward when unplaced on his debut in a Carlisle bumper in October, finished a creditable fourth behind Ask The Butler on his fencing bow at Leicester in January and easily landed the odds in a moderate affair at the same course 18 days ago, defeating Cabille (5lb better in) 12 lengths. Mark Tompkins's charge appears to have plenty of room for improvement but then again so does POTTER'S GALE and she should hold too many guns for him getting the 5lb. David Nicholson's mare, a dual winning hurdler last season and successful in her first two runs this term also over timber, made a winning start to her chasing career when coming home by 17 lengths at Huntingdon in January. The Strong Gale mare was left clear when Penrose Lad fell and brought down He Flies By Night two fences out but would probably have won in any case. Whereas she might have had a little luck that day, Potter's Gale had the misfortune of being badly hampered by a faller and unseating at the sixth in Edelweis Du Moulin's race at Haydock a week ago. She acts with cut in the ground and looks worth following. Non Vintage was a Flat scorer and has won four times over hurdles. But, even on his best effort as a chaser – a length-and-a-half second to Tejano Gold on his fencing bow at Market Rasen on Boxing Day – doesn't appear good enough. He was pulled up lame at Warwick a fortnight ago. **Selection: POTTER'S GALE**

2.30 LIGHT INFANTRY PLATE HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS C) £5,500 added 2m 110yds Penalty Value £3,795

1 5/1405 NEW INN (7) (CD) (Ian K I Stewart) S Gollings 7 12 0 Mr S Durack (5)
2 -3P344 EXECUTIVE DESIGN (18) (D) (L T Foster) Mrs M Reveley 6 11 13 P Niven
3 11212 NISHAMIRA (14) (CD) (M P Burke Developments Limited) D Nicholson 6 11 12 A Maguire
4 31121 EFFECTUAL (28) (D) (B C Dice) Miss V Williams 5 11 10 S Kelly (7)
5 12-115 TOSHIBA TALK (14) (D) (BF) (Toshiba (UK) Ltd) B Ellison 6 10 9 A Dobbin
– 5 declared –

BETTING: 2-1 Effectual, 3-1 Nishamira, 7-2 New Inn, 11-2 Executive Design, 6-1 Toshiba Talk
1997 More Dash Thancash 7 10 8 D Byrne 15-8 fav (Mrs M Jones) 8 ran

FORM GUIDE

An exciting clash here betweeen Nishamira and EFFECTUAL, who are both as consistent as they come. Nishamira was winning for the fourth time from six starts this season when slamming Fiond six lengths over course and distance five weeks back and she has finished runner-up in the other two, including last time when beaten four lengths by Line Of Conquest at Warwick, where she was giving the winner 15lb. Even so, Nishamira might again have to play second fiddle here, with Effectual clearly looking booked for further success when giving a seven-length drumming to Desert Mountain at Wetherby last time – his third victory from five outings. New Inn loves Doncaster – two course and distance wins – *and, although on top weight, will be happier back in handicap company* than when a 17-length fifth (of six) to odds-on Red Blazer in the Select Hurdle at Haydock a week ago. Executive Design, third to Raleagh Native on his chasing debut at Market Rasen in November, lost his confidence and was pulled up next time. He finished a fair fourth to Caulker when reverting to hurdling at Ayr and was hampered early when an 18-length fourth to Fatehalkhair at Sedgefield. **Selection: EFFECTUAL**

3.05 WILSIC TROPHY HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS B) £10,000 added 3m 110yds Penalty Value £6,526 — C4

1 1/P1-F TENNESSEE TWIST (14) (D) (Halewood International Ltd) Mrs J Pitman 8 12 0 D Leahy
Black, red and white striped sleeves, hooped cap
2 65-350 UNCLE DOUG (F28) (D D Saul) J L Eyre 7 11 7 B Storey
Yellow, purple star, yellow sleeves, purple stars
3 14-PP1 ARDRINA (14) (L G M Racing) F Murphy 7 11 6 Mr O McPhail (5)
Orange, emerald green cross belts, quartered cap
4 40-211 WHAT'S YOUR STORY (28) (Jerry Wright) P R Webber 9 11 5 R Garritty
Dark blue, white triple diamond, diamonds on sleeves and cap
5 123154 MISS ROBERTO (8) (M G Lilwall and Partners (2)) J O'Shea 5 11 2 Michael Brennan (3)
White, purple stars, mauve sleeves, mauve cap, purple star
– 5 declared –

BETTING: 6-4 Ardrina, 15-8 What's Your Story, 7-2 Miss Roberto, 10-1 Uncle Doug, 12-1 Tennessee Twist
1997: Ealing Court 8 10 0 J Osborne 9-2 (N Babbage) 7 ran

FORM GUIDE

ARDRINA, who has suffered from back problems, was pulled up in her first two outings this season but returned to her best when mastering Star Rage a head at Newcastle a fortnight ago, admittedly getting lumps of weight from the runner-up. Ferdy Murphy's mare is only 4lb higher this time and can follow up with good amateur Oliver McPhail clawing the 5lb. What's Your Story also came good last time, getting the better of Spendid by three parts of a length at Wetherby and he rates the chief threat racing off only a 3lb higher mark here. Miss Roberto rarely runs a bad race and has scored at Worcester and Lingfield this term while she was a 20-1 chance when a creditable fourth to Dana Point at Haydock eight days ago. Uncle Doug, formerly *trained by Mary Reveley and* now having his first race from Les Eyre's yard, hasn't won in three years while this will be a confidence restorer Tennessee Twist, off the track for a year when falling in the John Hughes Grand National Trial at Chepstow a fortnight ago. **Selection: ARDRINA**

3.35 MITSUBISHI SHOGUN TROPHY HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS C) £20,000 added 2m 3f 110yds Penalty Value £13,485 — C4

1 313U65 NATIVE MISSION (35) (C) (G E Shouler) J FitzGerald 11 12 0 F Leahy (3)
Royal blue, white cross of lorraine, white cap
2 11111 ANABRANCH (36) (CD) (Mrs M Barker) J M Jefferson 7 11 4 E Callaghan
Black, red cross of lorraine, white sleeves, red cap
3 -P5451 EASTHORPE (21) (C) (D) (Martin Broughton) Miss H Knight 10 10 13 2nd preference
Red, emerald green cross of lorraine and sleeves.
4 5P143U REAL TONIC (14) (C) (D) (BF) (Robert Ogden) G Richards 8 10 11 P Carberry
Mauve and pink check, white sleeves
5 13451 MARBLE MAN (25) (D J Lever) M Pell 8 10 0 D Bentley
Emerald green, yellow chevron, diabolo on sleeves, yellow cap
– 5 declared –

BETTING: 4-5 Anabranch, 3-1 Real Tonic, 7-2 Native Mission, 11-2 Marble Man
1997. Fickley 11 10 10 P Carberry 9-1 (G Richards) 8 ran

FORM GUIDE

ANABRANCH looks poised to extend the score to seven. She gained her most recent success in game fashion by a neck from the Tony McCoy-partnered market leader Naysari over course and distance five weeks ago and is 5lb higher today. With Easthorpe holding a preferred engagement at Newbury, second spot can go to Native Mission, even if he has rather lost his way lately. But he did beat Mister Oddy less than a length at Newbury in November. Real Tonic, after showing little in his first two races this season, trotted up at Newcastle in November when fitted with a tongue-strap. He finished a never-dangerous ten-length fourth to Cumbrian Challenge at Wetherby over Christmas and unshipped at Newcastle last time but, in between those races, was only two and a quarter lengths off the winner in third to Ask Me Later also at Gosforth Park. Marble Man has more on his plate than when winning at Carlisle (twice) and Sedgefield. **Selection: ANABRANCH**

4.10 VELKA PARDUBICKA GRIMTHORPE HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS B) £20,000 added 3m 2f £13,459 — C4

1 316-P0 SCOTTON BANKS (14) (CD) (I Bray) T Easterby 9 12 0 L Wyer
Light blue, red cross of lorraine and cap.
2 11-2PP COLONEL IN CHIEF (35) (Robert Ogden) G Richards 8 11 0 P Carberry
Mauve and pink check, white sleeves
3 -1311 THE TOISEACH (24) (C) (T & J Vestey) J Fanshawe 7 10 8 A Dobbin V
Red, yellow hooped sleeves and cap
4 211U11 GALATASORI JANE (14) (D) (B L Blinman) P Nicholls 8 10 7 T J Murphy
Red, white spots on sleeves and cap
5 PU-B53 RANDOM HARVEST (18) (C C Buckley) Mrs M Reveley 9 10 1 A Maguire
Dark blue and white stripes, red sleeves, white cap
6 324222 IN TRUTH (21) (BF) (Mrs E Houlton) S Gollings 10 10 0 Mr S Durack (5)
Purple and white diamonds, striped sleeves and cap
– 6 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weight: In Truth 9st 2lb.
BETTING: 11-8 The Toiseach, 4-1 In Truth, 9-2 Colonel In Chief, 5-1 Galatasori Jane, 11-2 Random Harvest, 25-1 Scotton Banks
1997 Father Sky 6 10 11 J Osborne 9-2 (O Sherwood) 8 ran

FORM GUIDE

The Toiseach was making it four wins from five attempts over fences when coming home by 29 lengths in a sub-standard Reynoldstown Chase at Ascot and is the one to beat but he is at short odds COLONEL IN CHIEF, a smart novice last term with four victories, looked set for another good season when beaten only a length and three-quarters by the useful Strath Royal at Wetherby in December on his reappearance. Favourite to take his revenge on Owen Brennan's charge on marginally better terms at Wetherby over Christmas, something must have gone amiss with Colonel in Chief being pulled up before three out, having dropped away quickly on the home turn. Colonel in Chief can be forgiven his latest run in the Great Yorkshire here because he was badly hampered when Major Bell fell at the 11th. In Truth finished an eight-length second to Speaker Weatherill in the Great Yorkshire – Random Harvest eight lengths adrift in fifth and 4lb better – but seems fated never to win and was runner-up for the fifth time this term when beaten half a length by Easthorpe at Market Rasen two weeks later. Galatasori Jane has been raised 14lb since her last handicap win at Taunton on her penultimate start and gets only 7lb from Colonel in Chief. Furthermore, she would prefer faster ground. Scotton Banks has little for recommendation after two races this term. **Selection: COLONEL IN CHIEF**

4.40 STAKIS CASINOS SERIES NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS B) £5,000 added 2m 4f £5,468 — C4

1 /1ll1-1 LADY REBECCA (128) (Kinnersley Optimists) Miss V Williams 6 11 9 N Williamson
Brown, dark green sleeves, yellow cap
2 3-5 GALESHAN (77) (J Hales) G Richards 6 11 2 A Dobbin
Yellow, red star, yellow sleeves, white armlets, yellow cap, red star
3 P- LORD COOLROE (286) (J Hanson) J Hanson 7 11 2 L Wyer
Red, green hoops, yellow cap, green hoops
4 10-053 SPIRIT OF STEEL (25) (B T Stewart-Brown) T Tate 5 11 2 J Callaghan
Royal blue, pink epaulets, pink cap
5 2-46 SYDNEY TWOTHOUSAND (NZ) (21) (Michael H Watt) Miss H Knight 8 11 2 P Carberry
Dark blue and white check, dark blue sleeves, emerald green cap
6 01 DOYENNE (11) (CD) (Grey Mare Partnership) Mrs D Haine 4 10 8 Mr S Durack
Scarlet, yellow sleeves, black cap
7 4 SUN ALERT (USA) (11) (K S Lee) M Polglase 4 10 2 A Maguire
Pink, yellow stripe, striped sleeves
– 7 declared –

BETTING: 6-4 Lady Rebecca, 7-2 Doyenne, 9-2 Sydney Twothousand, 11-2 Spirit Of Steel, 7-1 Galeshan, 12-1 Sun Alert, 33-1 Lord Coolroe
1997: Nigels Lad 5 11 8 M Foster 2-5 fav (P Haslam) 10 ran

FORM GUIDE

Lady Rebecca was unbeaten after three bumpers last term and won narrowly on her hurdling debut at Cheltenham in October but she has yet to encounter cut in the ground. It was good to firm when Doyenne beat Island Sanctuary half a length over course and distance 11 days ago – Sun Alert a four-length fourth and 6lb better off. One who will like the going is *SPIRIT OF STEEL, winner of a Catterick bumper on his debut a year* ago and a promising third behind Brother Of Iris when stepped up in trip at Carlisle on only his third appearance over timber. Galeshan, finished a close-up third of 17 to Go Cahnoots at Bangor a year ago on his single bumper start and will be the better for his third to Majestic Sound on his hurdling bow at Haydock in December. There is also better to come from Irish import Sydney Twothousand. **Selection: SPIRIT OF STEEL**

5.10 TOWN MOOR STANDARD NH FLAT RACE (CLASS H) £1,500 added 2m 110yds Penalty Value £1,329

1 6-15 CAMDEN MOON (32) (D) (BF) (J Hanson) J Hanson 5 11 11 Mr S Durack (5)
2 0- BACK ON THE LASH (441) (Liverpool Low-Life Club) Miss V Williams 6 11 4 S Kelly (7)
3 BODFARI NORTH (Bodfari Stud Ltd) M W Easterby 5 11 4 P Midgley (3)
4 CASH FOR QUESTIONS (P S Cresswell) R Fahey 6 11 4 F Leahy (3)
5 DEFENCE COUNSEL (A Snipe) G Richards 5 11 4 B Harding
6 0 DURNFORD BAY (42) (R W Giles) N Twiston-Davies 5 11 4 J Goldstein (7)
7 0/P JAFFA (20) (Mrs R Wormall) Miss J Wormall 6 11 4 Miss J Wormall (7)
8 JUST CLYDE (Mrs M R Beaumont) P Beaumont 6 11 4 B Grattan (5)
9 KONTRA KING (F E Downes) J Pickering 6 11 4 O Burrows (5)
10 NEVER SAD NEWSBOY (Anne Penney & Carol Bloom) J J Quinn 5 11 4 E Callaghan
11 0 OTTERBURN LAD (28) (R Haggas) Mrs J Brown 5 11 4 Mr C Bonner (3)
12 PARLANCA BAY (Mrs L J Tounsend) Mrs A Swinbank 6 11 4 Mr C Wilson
13 STICKY MOMENTS (B E S T Racing) A Streeter 6 11 4 T Siddall (7)
14 434 WOODFIELD GALE (48) (Mrs M B Scholey) Mrs M Reveley 5 11 4 G Lee
15 4 BELISARIO (37) (Paul G Jacobs) N Graham 4 10 10 Michael Brennan (3)
16 COME AND RUN (Winton Bloodstock Ltd) M W Easterby 4 10 10 P Morris (5)
17 HAJAMAT (J Joyce) W McKeown 4 10 10 N Horrocks (5)
18 2 OWTABEATIM (28) (I Bray) R Woodhouse 4 10 10 Mr K R O'Ryan (7)
– 18 declared –

BETTING: 7-2 Belisario, 4-1 Owtabeatim, 5-1 Defence Counsel, 13-2 Camden Moon, 7-1 Durnford Bay, 8-1 Woodfield Gale, 10-1 Back On The Lash, Never Sad Newsboy, 12-1 Bodfari North, 14-1 Just Clyde, 20-1 others
1997: Landler 4 10 6 E Callaghan (3) 33-1 (J Norton) 13 ran

FORM GUIDE

Beaten eight lengths by a useful type in Crazy Horse when a 50-1 shot for his debut at Wetherby four weeks ago, OWTABEATIM is bound to improve and can go one better. Camden Moon, successful at Musselburgh in December but a flop when a hotpot there last month, Belisario, a five-length fourth of 22 to Percy Parkeeper on his introduction at Huntingdon, and Woodfield Gale, in the frame in his three outings so far, can also figure. **Selection: OWTABEATIM**

Punters' Guide

The Toiseach must be given the vote

The former National Hunt jockey Steve Smith Eccles (right) gives a runner-by runner analysis of today's Grimthorpe Chase at Doncaster.



Scotton Banks: Certainly not the force he was and looks to have become moody.

Colonel In Chief: Hampered on his latest start on this track. If that run is ignored he can be given a big chance on the strength of his second to Strath Royal at Wetherby.

The Toiseach: *I taught this* horse to jump and he has taken to the chasing game really well, winning four out of five including the Reynoldstown Novices' Chase at Ascot. If the ground is good or faster, look no further for the winner.

Galatasori Jane: Trainer and horse are in good form. The mare has already won seven times this season, including last time at Warwick on sticky ground. If it comes up soft she has a chance at these weights.

Random Harvest: Has an each-way chance on his running behind Speaker Weatherill at Town Moor in January. Some stable-mates have not been firing on all cylinders, however.

In Truth: Likes this course, as he proved when second to Speaker Weatherill in the *Great Yorkshire Chase.* Although out of the handicap he could run another big race and has each-way claims.

Conclusion: The ground is the key factor but if it is on the fast side look no further then **THE TOISEACH** who trounced his rivals by 29 lengths in the Reynoldstown Novices' Chase at Ascot. Fellow novice Galatasori Jane must be on the short-list if the conditions are soft while Colonel In Chief could figure if his last run is ignored.

HYPERION'S TV TIPS

DONCASTER

3.05: WHAT'S YOUR STORY, who beat Spendid by threequarters of a length in a 2m 7f handicap hurdle at Wetherby last time, will be suited by today's soft ground and can follow up. Ardrina is in form but might prefer a faster surface and Tennessee Twist might prove a bigger danger.

□□□

3.35: ANABRANCH, who has developed into a prolific winner this season, *had the third, Dual Image,* left trailing 12 lengths when beating Naiysari by a neck over course and distance last time out. The ground is softer today, but that seems unlikely to bother the selection, who appears effective on any surface. Native Mission has not been running well and the in-form Marble Man and course winner Real Tonic promise to pose more problems.

4.10: COLONEL IN CHIEF, who was pulled up after being badly hampered when Major Bell fell at the 11th fence in the Great Yorkshire Handicap Chase over 3m here in January, is leniently handicapped on his 1¾-length second to Strath Royal over 3m 1f at Wetherby in December. The Toiseach and In Truth want faster ground.

□□□

4.40: SPIRIT OF STEEL, 2½-lengths third to Brother Of Iris over 2m 4f 110yds at Carlisle last time, is proven over this trip in soft ground and might represent a bit of value. Lady Rebecca is the obvious danger.

Wilsic Handicap Hurdle – 10-year-tale

	1988	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97
Fate of the favourites:	1	1	4	4	1	4	1D	1	2	2
Winner's place in betting:	1	1	0	0	1	2J	0	1	2	0
Starting prices:	6-5	3-1	12-1	7-1	85-40	3-1	9-1	7-2	5-1	9-2
Winning ages:	6	6	9	8	9	11	6	9	5	8
Winning weights:	11-6	9-10	10-3	10-1	11-10	10-8	11-10	12-0	10-0	10-0

Profit or loss to £1 stake: Favourites +£3.82. Second Favourites -£2.00.
Percentage of winners placed 1st, 2nd or 3rd in last race: 50%
Shortest-priced winner: Brown Windsor 6-5 (1988)
Longest-priced winner: Royal Charge 12-1 (1990)
Top trainer: No trainer has won this race more than once in the past 10 years
Top jockeys: D Byrne – Pokaree (1988), Thamesdown Tootsie (1991);
T Reed – Palanquin (1993) Attadale (1994)

First show

THE TOISEACH is a top priced 13-8 with the Tote – Ladbrokes go 5-4 – for the Velka Pardubicka Grimthorpe Handicap Chase at Doncaster (4.10), while In Truth is 6-1 with Ladbrokes – Coral offer just 4-1. Galatasori Jane is 6-1 with Ladbrokes – the Tote go 9-2.

Ian Davies

Doncaster – 4.10

Horse	C	H	L	T
The Toiseach	6-4	11-8	5-4	13-8
Colonel In Chief	4-1	4-1	4-1	9-2
Random Harvest	5-1	4-1	9-2	4-1
Galatasori Jane	11-2	11-2	6-1	9-2
In Truth	4-1	11-2	6-1	5-1
Scotton Banks	25-1	25-1	16-1	20-1

Each-way a fifth the odds, places, 1, 2
C - Coral, H - William Hill, L - Ladbrokes, T - Tote

Newbury

HYPERION

1.45 Stanmore 2.15 Redeemyourself 2.45 Halona 3.15 Easthopre 3.50 Top Note 4.20 Ken Risk 4.50 Smokey Joe

GOING: Chases – Soft; Hurdles – Heavy.
●Left-hand course with stiff fences.
●Course is SE of town near A34. Railway station (service from London, Paddington) adjoins course. **ADMISSION:** Members £14 £17 or £25; Tattersalls £12; Silver Ring £5 (OAPs half price) Accompanied 17-year-olds or under free all enclosures. **CAR PARK:** Free; Picnic area £4 per car plus £4 per person or £5 per car plus £5 per person.
●**LEADING TRAINERS:** D Nicholson 24-106 (22.6%), O Sherwood 18-59 (30.5%), N Henderson 16-93 (17.2%), M Pipe 14-76 (18.4%).
●**LEADING JOCKEYS:** M A Fitzgerald 14-121 (11.6%), C Llewellyn 10-102 (9.8%), P Holley 8-58 (13.8%), B Powell 8-92 (8.7%).
●**FAVOURITES:** 152-375 (40.5%).
BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Lakefield Leader (3.50).

1.45 JACK O'NEWBURY NOVICE CHASE (CLASS E) £4,100 added 2m 4f

1 U21P51 STANMORE (66) (D) C Brooks 6 11 9 S McNeill
2 20F5/2 BOLD DOLPHIN (40) T Forster 8 11 4 A Thornton
3 1-020F DUAL OR BUST (15) J Jenkins 7 11 4 P Hide
4 30/2P- QUAFF (463) J Gifford 8 11 4 L Aspell (3)
5 3012-2 TRISTRAM'S IMAGE (87) N Henderson 7 11 4 M A Fitzgerald
– 5 declared –

BETTING: 7-4 Stanmore, 15-8 Tristram's Image, 4-1 Bold Dolphin, 13-2 Dual Or Bust, 10-1 Quaff

2.15 BERKSHIRE HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS C) £7,000 added 3m

1 1-U441 MACGEORGE (18) (D) R Lee 8 11 10 A Thornton
2 13/P0P GREENHILL TARE AWAY (28) (D) P Hobbs 10 11 9 S McNeill
3 1-5F23 REDEEMYOURSELF (50) (C) J Gifford 9 11 5 M A Fitzgerald
4 2-1FP2 YEOMAN WARRIOR (18) R Rowe 11 11 2 D O'Sullivan
5 2-23FU HATCHAM BOY (21) (CD) D Nicholson 8 11 1 R Johnson
– 5 declared –

BETTING: 9-4 Macgeorge, 11-4 Hatcham Boy, 3-1 Yeoman Warrior, 7-2 Redeemyourself, 14-1 Greenhill Tare Away

2.45 WITNEY HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS C) £5,500 added 2m 110yds

1 /215- LIGHTENING LAD (361) (D) J King 10 12 0 J Culloty
2 060-23 KINGSFOLD PET (71) (CD) M Haynes 9 11 10 C Llewellyn
3 115032 EASY LISTENING (23) (D) N Hawke 6 11 6 M A Fitzgerald V
4 14/2-0 BLESS ME SISTER (49) (D) R Rowe 9 11 6 D O'Sullivan
5 1P-113 HALONA (35) (D) C Morlock 8 11 1 D Gallagher
– 5 declared –

BETTING: 5-2 Easy Listening, 11-4 Halona, 3-1 Kingsfold Pet, 4-1 Lightening Lad, 7-1 Bless Me Sister

3.15 NORTH SYDMONTON H'CAP CHASE (CLASS C) £10.000 added 2m 4f

1 152/P4 EASY BUCK (14) (CD) C Morlock 11 12 0 A Thornton
2 P0-P51 GOLDEN SPINNER (21) (CD) N Henderson 11 12 0 M A Fitzgerald
3 11F-F5 TOO PLUSH (15) (CD) A Turnell 9 11 4 L Harvey
4 -P5461 EASTHOPRE (21) (D) Miss H Knight 10 10 13 J F Titley
5 18-34 LANCE ARMSTRONG (21) (D) G McCourt 8 10 13 R Johnson
– 5 declared –

BETTING: 2-1 Golden Spinner, 5-2 Easthorpe, 7-2 Too Plush, 5-1 Easy Buck, 7-1 Lance Armstrong

3.50 JOHN KERMODE 60TH BIRTHDAY 'NH' NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS D) £4,000 added 2m 5f

1 5-114 LORD OF THE RIVER (58) (D) O Sherwood 6 11 10 J A McCarthy
2 030- DARK CHALLENGER (417) Mrs J Pitman 6 11 2 J F Titley
3 50-004 GORMAN (22) Miss H Knight 6 11 2 J Culloty
4 00 JUST A ROADIE (30) G Thorner 5 11 2 Clare Thorner (7)
5 231/42 LAKEFIELD LEADER (28) N Henderson 7 11 2 M A Fitzgerald B
6 5 MARLBOROUGH (76) T Forster 6 11 2 R Johnson
7 10P MERRY SHOT (44) Mrs J Pitman 6 11 2 R Farrant
8 4-302 SWEET LORD (28) M Bradstock 7 11 2 A Thornton
9 0/0 THE PALADIN (15) A Turnell 6 11 2 L Harvey
10 10-F32 TOP NOTE (45) J Gifford 6 11 2 P Hide
11 1/0 WOOLOOMOOLOO (26) N Henderson 6 11 2 T C Murphy (7)
– 11 declared –

BETTING: 3-1 Lakefield Leader, 100-30 Top Note, 4-1 Sweet Lord, 9-2 Lord Of The River, 8-1 Marlborough, 10-1 Gorman, 14-1 Merry Shot, 16-1 Wooloomooloo, 20-1 The Paladin, Dark Challenger, 50-1 Just A Roadie

4.20 LEVY BOARD NOVICE H'CAP HURDLE (CLASS D) £5,000 added 2m 110yds

1 11-11 ANDSUEPHI (70) (D) C Brooks 6 12 0 G Bradley
2 P53318 FILL THE BILL (98) (D) (BF) M Pipe 6 11 9 J Lower
3 -1324 INFAMOUS (22) (D) R O'Sullivan 5 11 8 M A Fitzgerald
4 153312 KEN RISK (18) (CD) (BF) M Pipe 6 11 5 J Evans B
5 2030- MUTANASSIB (359) M Pipe 5 11 4 A Thornton
6 322 ROSSMORE GIRL (14) N Twiston-Davies 5 10 12 C Llewellyn
7 3P3 GENERAL ASSEMBLY (17) G Margarson 6 10 6 M Richards
8 65U WOT NO FAX (21) G L Moore 5 10 1 R Johnson
9 0-40 CATHERINE'S WAY (25) A Turnell 8 10 0 L Harvey
– 9 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weight: Catherine's Way 9st 5lb.
BETTING: 3-1 Rossmore Girl, 100-30 Andsuephi, 4-1 Ken Risk, 7-1 Wot No Fax, 8-1 Mutanassib, 10-1 Fill The Bill, General Assembly, Infamous, 25-1 Catherine's Way

4.50 THATCHAM STANDARD OPEN NH FLAT RACE (CLASS H) £1,500 added 2m 110yds

1 13 MR MUSIC MAN (21) (D) (BF) J King 5 11 9 R Guest
2 43 BROGANIER (77) (BF) Mrs J Pitman 6 11 2 R Farrant
3 CAUGHT NAPPING N Twiston-Davies 5 11 2 C Llewellyn
4 3- CROOKEDSTONE (322) K Bailey 6 11 2 W Walsh (7)
5 DOOR TO DOOR C Brooks 6 11 2 G Bradley
6 FIT TO BUST N Babbage 5 11 2 B Fenton
7 0 LORD EDGAR (24) Mrs M Jones 6 11 2 Doubtful
8 0 NORMANTHESTRAWMAN (9) P Shakespeare 5 11 2 P Henley (3)
9 OFFSHORE J Gifford 5 11 2 L Aspell (3)
10 5 OSCAR WILDE (42) R Alner 6 11 2 A Thornton
11 PARTY LEADER Miss H Knight 5 11 2 J Culloty
12 1/33- SILVER SIROCCO (343) Mrs M Jones 6 11 2 M A Fitzgerald
13 SMOKEY JOE D Nicholson 6 11 2 R Massey (3)
14 6 THE BAT (36) A Jarvis 5 11 2 J F Titley
15 THE ISLANDER G Balding 5 11 2 B Clifford
16 3 YOUNG THRUSTER (25) N Twiston-Davies 5 11 2 L Suthern (7)
17 HOLLY HATCH J Mullins 6 10 11 A Bates (5)
18 WOODBURY HILL A James 4 10 6 L Harvey
– 18 declared –

BETTING: 4-1 Door To Door, 5-1 Mr Music Man, 13-2 Smokey Joe, 7-1 Caught Napping, 8-1 Party Leader, Broganier, 12-1 Offshore, Young Thruster, The Bat, 14-1 Crookedstone, Oscar Wilde, Silver Sirocco, 16-1 The Islander; 25-1 others

Warwick

HYPERION

2.05 Moonlight Air 2.35 The Land Agent 3.10 A N C Express 3.45 Erlking 4.15 Mon Amie 4.45 Double Silk 5.15 Gaelic

INSPECTION 7.15

GOING: Soft.
●Left-hand course. Run-in of 240 yards.
●Course is W of city on B4095. Buses from stations at Warwick (1m) and Leamington Spa (2m). **ADMISSION:** Club £12 (16 to 24-year-olds £6): Tattersalls £8; Course £5. **CAR PARK:** £3.
●**LEADING TRAINERS:** M Pipe 28-115 (24.3%), D Nicholson 23-110 (20.9%), Mrs J Pitman 17-78 (21.8%), N T-Davies 12-89 (13.5%).
●**LEADING JOCKEYS:** A P McCoy 19-46 (41.3%), R Farrant 9-59 (15.3%), J R Kavanagh 9-59 (15.3%), A Thornton 9-66 (13.6%).
●**FAVOURITES:** 170-435 (39.1%).
BLINKERED FIRST TIME: None.

2.05 WATERGALL NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS E) £2,900 added 2m 4f 110yds

1 00/013 MAJESTIC SOUND (42) T Forster 7 11 8 N Williamson
2 4-41B BESSIE BROWNE (82) G Hubbard 6 11 3 R Guest
3 33/F14 MOONLIGHT AIR (14) (D) J Spearing 7 11 3 A P McCoy
4 600 ANNMARSNAN (26) T Casey 6 11 2 T J Murphy
5 0/306- APRIL SEVENTH (386) J Neville 7 11 2 T Dascombe
6 58450- IRISH DELIGHT (295) R Curtis 6 11 2 J Leach
7 02-0P0 MUALLAF (37) Mrs A Woodrow 6 11 2 Mr G Baines (7)
8 00F0-P NICANJON (105) J Allen 7 11 2 Gary Lyons
9 -32003 ROYAL SCIMITAR (USA) (29) M Tompkins 6 11 2 R Thornton
10 00 TAUFAN BOY (21) G Balding 5 11 2 B Fenton
11 -U0040 HYDEMILLA (91) Mrs T Pilkington 8 10 11 V Slattery
12 0 MA BARNICLE (9) P Eccles 5 10 11 D Byrne
13 FLOTILLA (P12) S Mellor 4 10 7 C Webb (3)
14 64 HIGHLY PRIZED (29) J King 4 10 7 T Jenks
– 14 declared –

BETTING: 9-4 Majestic Sound, 7-2 Moonlight Air, 9-2 Royal Scimitar, 5-1 Taufan Boy, 6-1 Bessie Browne, 12-1 Highly Prized, 20-1 Flotilla, Hydemilla, Irish Delight, 33-1 April Seventh, 50-1 others

2.35 EXTERIOR PROFILES LTD NOVICE HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS C) £10,000 added 2m 4f 110yds

1 353-14 MELSTOCK MEGGIE (43) (C) C Brooks 6 11 13 G Bradley
2 -53424 THE LAND AGENT (24) J Mullins 7 11 11 R Guest
3 PF2-44 RAFTERS (4) (CD) J M Bradley 9 11 1 S Wynne
4 4F1121 CAPENWRAY (9) (D) J King 9 11 1 A P McCoy
5 P6-U11 CARLINGFORD GALE (14) (D) T George 7 10 9 R Thornton
6 2-131P LUKE WARM (51) D Gandolfo 8 10 7 B Fenton
7 65-6F1 CALM DOWN (38) (D) T Casey 7 10 5 N Williamson
– 7 declared –

BETTING: 11-4 Carlingford Gale, 7-2 Calm Down, 4-1 Capenwray, 9-2 The Land Agent, 5-1 Melstock Meggie, 16-1 Luke Warm, 25-1 Rafters

3.10 CRUDWELL CUP HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS C) £10,000 added 3m 5f

1 22-2FP SOUNDS STRONG (35) D Nicholson 9 11 12 R Thornton
2 0-3011 A N C EXPRESS (25) (CD) J King 10 11 9 A P McCoy
3 11U-2F CHOISTY (14) H Haynes 8 10 9 R McGrath (3)
4 -11F52 TOP JAVALIN (NZ) (44) N Hawke 11 10 6 R Greene V
5 1-1344 MISS DISKIN (29) (C) R Buckler 9 10 1 B Powell
6 333U12 LAY IT OFF (15) (D) J O'Neill 9 10 0 S Curran
– 6 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weight: Lay It Off 9st 6lb.
BETTING: 10-11 A N C Express, 4-1 Top Javalin, 5-1 Sounds Strong, 13-2 Miss Diskin, 10-1 Lay It Off, 25-1 Choisty

3.45 EMSCOTT CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS F) £2,400 added 2m

1 P-1U32 ERLKING (17) (D) (BF) S Mellor 8 11 10 C Webb
2 -63306 LOTSCHBERG EXPRESS (71) D Gandolfo 6 10 11 Sophie Mitchell
3 0P3P2- SYLVESTER (371) Miss A Broyd 8 10 9 R Thornton
4 -FP440 IODER WAN (14) (D) Mrs C Hicks 6 10 8 L Cummins
5 -P5504 CAPSOFF (15) G Hubbard 5 10 8 C Honour (7)
6 23125P PRAIRIE MINSTREL (USA) (7) (D) R Dickin 4 10 8 X Aizpuru
7 00F4U- CHARLIES DELIGHT (322) (D) Mrs C Hicks 10 10 1 M Batchelor (3)
8 4-040P SIR PAGEANT (93) (C) K Bridgwater 9 10 0 M Griffiths (3)
– 8 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weight: Sir Pageant 9st 7lb.
BETTING: 5-2 Erlking, 100-30 Prairie Minstrel, 4-1 Lotschberg Express, 9-2 Loder Wan, 8-1 Capsoff, Sylvester, 20-1 Sir Pageant, 25-1 Charlies Delight

4.15 BLACKDOWN HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS C) £5,500 added 2m 4f 110yds

1 2-61R0 ANGELO'S DOUBLE (49) (D) R Buckler 10 11 10 B Powell
2 F-3P45 GAROLO (FR) (12) C Brooks 8 11 7 S McNeill B
3 41-F1 MON AMIE (29) A Hobbs 8 10 7 A P McCoy
4 163250 MERILENA (37) (D) G Hubbard 8 10 0 R Thornton
– 4 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weight: Merilena 9st 9lb.
BETTING: 13-8 Mon Amie, 15-8 Garolo, 4-1 Merilena, 5-1 Angelo's Double

4.45 TOWN OF WARWICK FOXHUNTERS' TROPHY HUNTER CHASE (CLASS H) £1,350 added 3m 2f

1 1512-2 DOUBLE SILK (17) (CD) (BF) R C Wilkins 14 12 10 Mr E Williams (7)
2 3821-4 THE MALAKARMA (25) (CD) Mrs C Bailey 12 12 10 Mr B Pollock (5) B
3 12/P5- GOLDEN DROPS (365) A Hobbs 10 12 3 A Wintle (7)
4 64P-05 PANT LLIN (9) F Matthews 12 12 3 Mr M FitzGerald (7) B
5 4220-3 SIRISAT (17) J Tuck 14 12 3 Miss T Blazey (7)
6 U6-420 WALKERS POINT (P7) C Loggin 12 12 3 Mr A Martin (7)
– 6 declared –

BETTING: 4-6 Double Silk, 9-4 The Malakarma, 10-1 Sirisat, 16-1 Golden Drops, 20-1 Pant Llin, 25-1 Walkers Point

5.15 EDSTONE INTERMEDIATE OPEN NATIONAL HUNT FLAT RACE (CLASS H) £1,500 added fillies & mares 2m

1 F- A BIT OF FLUFF (366) R J Price 6 11 2 Miss E James (7)
2 0 BETHS GIFT (14) C M Price 5 11 2 D J Burchell
3 CHINESE LANTERN T Casey 5 11 2 M Clarke
4 23 CRAZY CRUSADER (52) (BF) D Gandolfo 6 11 2 G Upton
5 GAELIC N Twiston-Davies 6 11 2 T Jenks
6 33 KATES CHARM (175) R J Price 5 11 2 L Cummins (5)
7 4 LITTLE RED SPIDER (108) P R Webber 5 11 2 S McNeill
8 VERITY VALENTINE A Turnell 5 11 2 M Griffiths (7)
9 BUZZSWORD R Buckler 4 10 8 B Powell
10 0 DORANS GROVE (25) J King 4 10 8 A P McCoy
11 EMMACAN G Hubbard 4 10 8 G Branton (7)
12 2 KNIGHTSBRIDGE BRED (25) I Williams 4 10 8 R Thornton
13 4 MISS PINK (25) Mrs P Sly 4 10 8 Mr O McPhail (5)
– 13 declared –

BETTING: 11-4 Knightsbridge Bred, 4-1 Crazy Crusader, 9-2 Gaelic, 13-2 Miss Pink, 7-1 Dorans Grove, 8-1 Little Red Spider, 10-1 Kates Charm, 16-1 Emmacan, 20-1 Buzzsword, Chinese Lantern, 25-1 Verity Valentine, 33-1 others

Wolverhampton

HYPERION

7.00 Sky Mountain 7.30 Ambiguous 8.00 Up In Flames 8.30 Dancing Rio 9.00 Chemcast 9.30 OK Babe

GOING: Standard (All-weather track).
STALLS: 7f – outside; rest – inside.
DRAW ADVANTAGE: High from 6f to 1m 4f.
●Fibresand, left-hand, oval course.
●Course is N of town on A449. Wolverhampton station 1m. **ADMISSION:** Club £15, Tattersalls £6 (OAP members of Diamond Club £4); Viewing Restaurant £25.90 including entrance and meal correct until March 1998. **CAR PARK:** free.
●**LEADING TRAINERS:** R Hollinshead 64-622 (10.3%), M Johnston 57-258 (22.1%), J Berry 45-306 (14.7%), P Haslam 33-219 (18.6%).
●**LEADING JOCKEYS:** J Weaver 58-276 (21%), S Sanders 44-346 (12.7%), Dean McKeown 28-256 (10.9%), J Quinn 25-409 (6.1%).
●**FAVOURITES:** 399-1230 (32.4%).
BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Into Debt (visored) (9.00), My Lost Love (visored) (9.30).

7.00 BORIS POGOFF MAIDEN HANDICAP (CLASS F) £3,000 added 7f

1 25/0-0 DARGO (17) C Thornton 4 10 0 Dean McKeown 5
2 046 ENDLESS HOURS (22) J L Eyre 4 9 8 R Lappin 2
3 8006-0 BLOOD ORANGE (44) G Margarson 4 9 4 A Clark 6
4 -50205 POW WOW (19) E Alston 4 8 13 K Fallon 8
5 03-5 HEVER GOLF PASSION (14) T J Naughton 3 8 12 S Sanders 4
6 0/006- FORMIDABLE FLAME (423) W Musson 5 8 11 D R McCabe 11
7 -40033 SKY MOUNTAIN (8) S R Bowring 3 8 6 Dale Gibson 3 V
8 00323- MISCONDUCT (75) G L Moore 4 8 6 S Whitworth 9
9 660/04 INFIRAAJ (USA) (8) S R Bowring 6 8 8 C Teague (5) 12
10 0-505 HOLDERNESS GIRL (15) Miss J Craze 5 8 6 T Williams 10
11 /000-3 NATTIE (15) A Barrow 4 8 7 A McCarthy (5) 1
12 -33323 PEARLY QUEEN (11) G Bravery 3 8 6 J Quinn 7
– 12 declared –

BETTING: 7-2 Infiraaj, 4-1 Sky Mountain, 5-1 Endless Hours, 6-1 Pow Wow, 7-1 Misconduct, 8-1 Hever Golf Passion, 10-1 Pearly Queen, 12-1 Blood Orange, 14-1 Dargo, 16-1 Holderness Girl, Formidable Flame, 20-1 Nattie

7.30 NOLA BANQUO LIMITED STAKES (CLASS F) £3,000 added 3YO 1m 100yds

1 000-1 AMBIGUOUS (3) (CD) D Loder 9 1 K Fallon 4
2 565-5 LAUREN'S LAD (8) G Lewis 9 1 A Clark 8
3 0-6421 NUIT D'OR (10) (CD) N Littmoden 9 1 J Weaver 9 B
4 304064 ESTOPPED (7) M Quinn 8 12 A Whelan 7 V
5 00-253 MALOZZA (5) (C) P Evans 8 12 J F Egan 5
6 0100-0 PINK TICKET (16) (CD) P Evans 8 12 S Sanders 2
7 40-353 BINT NADIA (19) Miss J Craze 8 9 Carolyn Bales (7) 1
8 5000- CHASKA (152) A Bailey 8 9 D Wright 6
9 24650- SASSY (135) A Jarvis 8 9 A McCarthy (5) 3
– 9 declared –

BETTING: 4-7 Ambiguous, 5-1 Nuit D'Or, 8-1 Laurens Lad, 10-1 Malozza, 12-1 Sassy, 14-1 Chaska, Pink Ticket, Bint Nadia, 25-1 Estopped

8.00 JACK KIRKLAND HANDICAP (CLASS E) £3,750 added 1m 1f 79yds

1 -2130 BE WARNED (18) (CD) J Pearce 7 10 0 A Polli (5) 11 V
2 00-545 SUEZ TORNADO (8) E Alston 5 9 10 K Fallon 4
3 050-04 OUR WAY (19) M Brittain 4 9 7 D Mernagh (7) 5
4 231D44 YEOMAN OLIVER (14) (CD) B McMahon 5 9 6 L Newton 2 B
5 25-21 BONGO (14) (CD) P Evans 4 9 3 J F Egan 7
6 530-32 DR EDGAR (40) J L Eyre 6 9 1 T Williams 1 V
7 0002-2 INDIAN BLAZE (26) P Harris 4 9 0 C Lowther (3) 12
8 04-643 EUROBOX BOY (26) (BF) A Jarvis 5 8 12 A McCarthy (5) 13
9 512-4 UP IN FLAMES (38) (CD) S R Bowring 7 8 11 C Teague (3) 5
10 101-65 COLINS CHOICE (42) (CD) J Spearing 4 8 10 P Fessey (3) 3
11 0460-0 FALLS O'MONESS (11) (D) K Burke 4 8 4 S Righton (7) 10
12 500-13 WELCOME LU (12) (BF) J L Harris 5 8 1 F Norton 8
13 10-006 GIRL OF MY DREAMS (12) (C) M Heaton-Ellis 5 7 10 J Quinn 9
– 13 declared –

BETTING: 4-1 Up In Flames, 9-2 Dr Edgar, 5-1 Indian Blaze, 7-1 Eurobox Boy, 8-1 Be Warned, 9-1 Suez Tornado, 10-1 Bongo, Welcome Lu, 12-1 Yeoman Oliver, Colins Choice, 14-1 Our Way, 16-1 Girl Of My Dreams, 20-1 Falls O'Moness

8.30 BC BARTON AND SON LTD CENTENARY HANDICAP (CLASS D) £5,000 added 3YO 1m 4f

1 12211 DANCING RIO (8) (D) P Haslam 9 7 C Lowther (3) 6
2 00-132 SPIRIT OF LOVE (USA) (8) M Johnston 9 1 J Fanning 4
3 000-12 FRANKIE FERRARI (21) (BF) D Loder 9 0 K Fallon 5 V
4 022 NEW YORKER (USA) (23) P Cole 8 2 C Rutter 3
5 -46331 KATIE'S CRACKER (5) M Quinn 7 12 (6ex) F Norton 1
6 0-1620 SHARWAY LADY (29) B McMahon 7 10 S Righton (7) 7 B
7 012-42 OPERATIC (10) (C) P Evans 7 10 A McCarthy (5) 8 V
8 30-00 TEEPLOY GIRL (17) N Littmoden 7 10 D Wright 2
– 8 declared –

Minimum weight: 7st 10lb. True handicap weights: Sharway Lady 7st 7lb, Operatic 7st 5lb, Teeploy Girl 6st 8lb.
BETTING: 2-1 Frankie Ferrari, 11-4 Dancing Rio, 5-1 New Yorker, 11-2 Katie's Girl, 6-1 Spirit Of Love, 12-1 Operatic 14-1 Sharway Lady, 33-1 Teeploy Girl

9.00 RIDGEMOUNT DRIVE SELLING STAKES (CLASS G) £2,500 added 5f

1 321233 FEATHERSTONE LANE (15) (CD) L Siddall 7 9 3 Dean McKeown 9
2 10-255 PALACEGATE JACK (38) (D) (BF) J Berry 7 9 3 Iona Wands (5) 8 B
3 300014 PLEIN GAZ (FR) (11) J Bridger 5 9 3 G Bardwell 7
4 004000 BOFFY (12) (CD) B Baugh 5 8 11 A Culhane 10
5 0-6353 CHEMCAST (31) (D) J L Eyre 5 8 11 R Lappin 2 B
6 440-50 RENNYHOLME (31) (CD) A Mulholland 7 8 11 T Lucas 5
7 6000-5 THREEPLAY (16) J Akehurst 4 8 11 J Weaver 4
8 3007- TOM TOM (J176) N Chance 6 8 11 M Tebbutt 1
9 00-000 INTO DEBT (39) J R Poulton 5 8 6 A McCarthy (5) 6 V
10 665564 SUPERLAO (BEL) (16) (D) J Bridger 6 8 6 D Williams (7) 3
– 10 declared –

BETTING: 7-4 Chemcast, 5-2 Palacegate Jack, 100-30 Featherstone Lane, 8-1 Plein Gaz, 10-1 Tom Tom, 12-1 Threeplay, 20-1 Superlao, 25-1 others

9.30 MRS MARGARET TERRY'S 60TH BIRTHDAY HANDICAP (CLASS E) £3,750 added 3YO 6f

1 15-421 OK BABE (29) (CD) J Akehurst 9 7 D Biggs 11
2 332-61 ERRO CODIGO (12) (D) S Kettlewell 9 7 P Fredericks (7) 3
3 003-51 AFTER EIGHT (32) (D) M Saunders 9 6 R Price 13 B
4 102-40 RUSSIAN ROMEO (17) (CD) B McMahon 9 5 L Newton 5 B
5 5306-3 L'ESTABLE FLEURIE (14) P Makin 9 4 S Sanders 9
6 1230-2 ELLENBROOK (19) (CD) J Berry 9 2 P Fessey (3) 6 B
7 540-13 SORRIDAR (19) (CD) J L Eyre 8 13 D Pears 2
8 1254-0 ALWAYS LUCKY (22) (D) J Pearce 8 12 A Polli (3) 8
9 -43233 ROCKSWAIN (17) (C) (BF) P Haslam 8 10 J Weaver 10
10 04-030 MY LOST LOVE (29) M Johnston 8 7 Dean McKeown 4 V
11 00-5 CROFTERS EDGE (14) A Jarvis 8 4 C Lowther (3) 7
12 64-041 DAHLIDYA (17) (C) M Polglase 8 3 A McCarthy (5) 12
13 0-0314 SING FOR ME (3) (C) (BF) R Hollinshead 8 1 J Quinn 1
– 13 declared –

BETTING: 7-2 Ellenbrook, 9-2 Sorridar, 11-2 Ok Babe, 7-1 Erro Codigo, 8-1 Dahlidya, 10-1 L'Estable Fleurie, 12-1 After Eight, Sing For Me, Rockswain, 14-1 Crofters Edge, Russian Romeo, 16-1 Always Lucky, 20-1 My Lost Love

Huntingdon

HYPERION

2.25 Pomme Secret 2.55 Dantes Cavalier 3.25 Polar Lord 4.00 Sierra Bay 4.30 Crane Hill 5.00 Tilty

INSPECTION 7.15

GOING: Good to Soft (Soft in places).
●Right-hand, level course. Run-in 200yds.
●Course is at junction of A1 and A604. Huntingdon station (service from London, King's Cross) 1m. **ADMISSION:** Members £13; Paddock £10; Course £5. **CAR PARK:** free.
●**LEADING TRAINERS:** K Bailey 24-73 (32.9%), G Hubbard 17-73 (23.3%), J Gifford 16-79 (20.3%), T Forster 14-60 (23.3%).
●**LEADING JOCKEYS:** P Hide 18-70 (25.7%), R Dunwoody 16-87 (18.4%), W Marston 9-64 (14.1%), M Brennan 8-55 (14.5%).
●**FAVOURITES:** 228-524 (43.5%).
BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Chief Predator (2.25).

2.25 COLESDEN SELLING HURDLE (CLASS G) £2,000 added 2m 110yds

1 00-614 POMME SECRET (11) (D) (BF) M Pipe 5 12 0 R Hughes B
2 FUUU-0 ALAPA (23) A Coogan 11 11 2 T Kent
3 33U00- BEAU CYRANO (310) (D) D Cantillon 6 11 2 M Brennan
4 PP-P2 GENTLE TUNE (101) (D) J R Best 8 11 2 C Maude
5 P1E00 KENALAN LAD (37) Mrs V Ward 8 11 2 P Henley (3)
6 006/ MACS HERO (612) C Smith 8 11 2 M Ranger
7 RP-C0F MOST VITAL (23) W G M Turner 7 11 2 D Verco
8 0 NORDINEX (16) P Hayward 6 11 2 I Lawrence
9 REINHARDT (F184) L Lloyd-James 5 11 2 W Marston
10 22600 SLIEMA CREEK (22) (D) P Hobbs 4 11 0 R Dunwoody B
11 PPPP-0 ABBEYDORAN (F10) D Burchell 7 10 11 T Eley
12 00 TINKERS NIGHT (23) W Musson 7 10 11 M Mooney (7)
13 46 CHIEF PREDATOR (10) D Williams 4 10 8 Mr Edgar Byrne (7) B
14 00 DISILLUSIONED (F18) K Wingrove 4 10 8 J Ryan
15 0 MARX MISTRESS (15) J O'Shea 4 10 3 Martin Smith (7)
– 15 declared –

BETTING: 13-8 Sliema Creek, 2-1 Pomme Secret, 7-1 Gentle Tune, 10-1 Chief Predator, Nordinex, 14-1 Tinkers Night, 16-1 Disillusioned, Kenalan Lad, Marx Mistress, Reinhardt 20-1 others

2.55 WYBOSTON NOVICE CHASE (CLASS E) £4,000 added 2m 4f 110yds

1 04-F-P COUNTRY BARLE (45) H Hodge 10 11 2 Mr R Wakley (3)
2 -32432 DANTES CAVALIER (66) (BF) D Gandolfo 8 11 2 R Dunwoody
3 P/0 EXECUTIVE KING (69) G Hubbard 7 11 2 G Tormey
4 -34220 JOLLY HEART (11) O Brennan 8 11 2 M Brennan
5 1-5 SHADRACH (71) (D) Mrs H Mobley 7 11 2 W Marston
– 5 declared –

BETTING: 4-5 Dantes Cavalier, 11-4 Jolly Heart, 5-1 Shadrach, 12-1 Executive King, 14-1 Country Barle

3.25 TIM PRICE 18TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION 'NH' NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS E) £2,900 added 3m 2f

1 -PP5UP CUMBERLAND YOUTH (82) Miss C Caroe 7 11 4 M H Naughton (5) B
2 30 FAIR FARM LAD (25) J Jefferson 5 11 4 G Tormey
3 -4RP3R PHYSICAL FUN (37) A Blackmore 7 11 4 R Garrard (7)
4 243 POLAR LORD (14) K Bailey 6 11 4 Mr R Wakley (3)
5 FFP ACCOUNTANCY LADY (47) M Pipe 8 10 13 R Hughes
– 5 declared –

BETTING: 4-5 Polar Lord, 11-4 Fair Farm Lad, 3-1 Accountancy Lady, 14-1 Physical Fun, 33-1 Cumberland Youth

4.00 LESLEY ANN WALKER BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS D) £5,000 added 2m 110yds

1 1-425U MISTER DRUM (70) (CD) M Wilkinson 9 12 0 W Marston
2 -PP440 THUMBS UP (22) (CD) G McCourt 12 11 5 Mr D Harvey (7)
3 F1U6-0 GEALLAINNBAN (26) (D) P Hobbs 8 10 12 Mr R Widger (7) B
4 P-R11F SIERRA BAY (9) (CD) (BF) O Sherwood 8 10 7 R Dunwoody
5 14F063 WHO'S TO SAY (9) (D) Dr P Pritchard 12 10 2 Dr P Pritchard
6 14610/ BELAFONTE (849) (D) Miss K George 11 10 0 C Maude
– 6 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weight: Belafonte 9st 13lb.
BETTING: 8-11 Sierra Bay, 4-1 Mister Drum, 5-1 Thumbs Up, 10-1 Who's To Say, 12-1 Geallainnban, 14-1 Belafonte

4.30 CHAWSTON HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS F) £3,250 added 3m

1 3161,2 DOROBO (NZ) (40) (D) T Forster 10 11 10 R Dunwoody
2 0/P321 SAXON DUKE (58) (D) P Hobbs 7 11 8 G Tormey
3 65P-45 STAGE PLAYER (85) (D) Miss C Caroe 12 11 1 I Lawrence
4 44-43F CRANE HILL (9) Simon Earle 8 11 0 C Maude B
5 65-P23 POTATO MAN (25) B Ellison 12 10 12 S Taylor (3)
6 ,35-6U BARONCELLI (23) M Wilkinson 8 10 9 W Marston
7 00UUF4 POLO PONY (30) J Upson 6 10 3 J Supple
8 5/PP56 BALLYGRIFFIN LAD (26) T McGovern 9 10 0 E Husband (3)
– 8 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weight: Ballygriffin Lad 9st 7lb.
BETTING: 5-4 Dorobo, 6-2 Saxon Duke, 6-1 Potato Man, 7-1 Crane Hill, 12-1 Polo Pony, Stage Player, 14-1 Baroncelli, 20-1 Ballygriffin Lad

5.00 WILDEN HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS E) £2,900 added 3m 2f

1 -05F10 TILTY (USA) (25) (CD) A Streeter 8 11 10 T Eley V
2 -24430 SCARBA (14) J Jefferson 10 11 4 G Tormey
3 60-588 LITTLE GUNNER (19) M Sheppard 8 11 2 R Bellamy
4 406050 MR CHRISTIE (8) Miss L Siddall 6 11 0 R Dunwoody
5 5/6-21 DARU (USA) (45) (C) R Hollinshead 9 10 12 Gary Lyons
6 152123 SAUCY NUN (66) (D) (BF) P Hiatt 6 10 8 E Husband (3)
7 408-31 RAY RIVER (28) K Wingrove 6 10 1 J Ryan
8 6P-435 WHITEBONNET (37) C Jackson 8 10 0 Miss S Jackson B
9 PP-0PF HUGE MISTAKE (19) C Hemsley 9 10 0 M Brennan B
– 9 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weights: Whitebonnet 9st 6lb, Huge Mistake 9st 3lb.
BETTING: 7-2 Daru, 9-2 Scarba, 11-2 Tilty, 6-1 Mr Christie, 13-2 Ray River, 7-1 Saucy Nun, 8-1 Whitebonnet, Little Gunner, 20-1 Huge Mistake

●Arctic Kinsman has fractured a pelvis and will miss the Queen Mother Champion Chase. Nicky Henderson will delay a decision over Sharpical's Champion Hurdle participation until Tuesday.

Results

DONCASTER

2.00: 1. DOCTOOR (A P McCoy) 10-11 fav; 2. Kneyton Knight 25-1; 3. Tel E Thon 33-1. 12 ran. 6, 3½. (M Pipe). Tote: £1.80; £1.20, £2.60, £9.10. DF: £15.50. CSF: £29.68. Trio: £169.80.

2.30: 1. ORGAN RECITAL (M Brennan) 5-4 fav; 2. Sharp Command 100-30; 3. Kidlaw 5-1. 7 ran. 2½, dist. (O Brennan). Tote: £2.20; £2.50, £1.80. DF: £4.30. CSF: £5.37. NR: Our Kris.

3.00: 1. DESERT BRAVE (R Guest) 2-1 fav; 2. Hya Prim 100-1; 3. Leap Frog 10-1. 8 ran. 2½, 11. (Mrs S Smith). Tote: £2.80; £1.00, £12.90, £2.50. DF: £342.30. CSF: £178.74. Tricast: £1486.32.

3.30: 1. GEORGE DILLINGHAM (R Guest) 4-1; 2. Dan De Man 9-4 fav; 3. Alpa's Honor 6-1. 14 ran. 12, 6. (Denys Smith). Tote: £4.50; £1.70, £1.80, £1.80. DF: £6.40. CSF: £13.04. Tricast: £54.87. Trio: £15.20. NR: Coral Island.

4.00: 1. LORD YORK (A P McCoy) 7-2; 2. Nordic Prince 7-4 fav; 3. The Full Monty 10-1. 10 ran. ¾, 16. (T Forster). Tote: £4.40; £1.60, £1.30, £2.20. DF: £4.70. CSF: £9.90. Trio: £24.20. NRs: Second Fiddle, Squaddie.

4.30: 1. ARCTIC LIFE (Mr D S Jones) 20-1; 2. James The First 4-1; 3. My Nominee 12-1. 14 ran. 11-4 fav Auburn Castle. 1, dist. (Mrs E Jones). Tote: £72.70; £13.40, £2.20, £4.50. DF: £101.50. CSF: £93.25. Trio: £199.50. NR: Slievenamon Mist.

5.00: 1. SAHARA REEM (D Byrne) 20-1; 2. Threads 13-2; 3. Little Twig 16-1. 11 ran. 5-2 fav Mary Gale. 3½, 27. (J Norton). Tote: £38.40; £5.70, £2.90, £1.60. DF: £104.70. CSF: £142.97. Trio: £208.60.

Jackpot: £28,770.80 – part won. Pool of £32,417.87 carried forward to Doncaster today. **Placepot:** £88.40. **Quadpot:** £47.20. **Place 6:** £33.28. **Place 5:** £18.33.

KELSO

2.20: 1. SWANBISTER (R Supple) 8-11 fav; 2. Callernoy 9-1; 3. Kings Lane 16-1. 16 ran. 6, ¾. (L Lungo). Tote: £1.40; £1.30, £2.30, £3.80. DF: £8.50. CSF: £7.26. Trio: £84.60.

2.50: 1. HERITAGE (P Carberry) 10-11 fav; 2. Job Rage 50-1; 3. Marsud 7-2. 13 ran. 8, ½. (Mrs S Bramall). Tote: £1.70; £1.20, £15.40, £1.70. DF: £60.60. CSF: £61.95. Trio: £69.10.

3.20: 1. DAVY BLAKE (A S Smith) 6-1; 2. Major Bell 7-2 fav; 3. McGregor The Third 4-1. 8 ran. 14, dist. (T Dalgetty). Tote: £7.40; £1.90, £1.50, £1.30. DF: £14.00. CSF: £22.33. Tricast: £71.59. Trio: £24.50. NR: Fivelegh Builds.

3.50: 1. LEVITICUS (J Callaghan) 6-1; 2. Deep Water 2-1 fav; 3. Ledgendry Line 9-2. 9 ran. 1½, 13. (T Tate). Tote: £7.60; £2.30, £1.10, £2.00. DF: £8.40. CSF: £17.24. Trio: £22.50.

4.20: 1. BETTER TIMES AHEAD (Mr A Parker) 12-1; 2. Grate Deel 7-2; 3. Wudimp 15-2. 7 ran. 3, 7. (G Richards). Tote: £17.30; £4.30, £1.60. DF: £23.20. CSF: £45.81.

4.50: 1. ONYOUROWN (A S Smith) 20-1; 2. Common Sound 9-2; 3. Brambles Way 3-1. 6 ran. 17, 3½. (J H Johnson). Tote: £19.50; £5.80, £2.00. DF: £27.40. CSF: £92.00. NR: Prelude To Fame.

Placepot: £129.60. **Quadpot:** £97.20. **Place 6:** £107.38. **Place 5:** £78.89.

NEWBURY

2.10: 1. CALON LAN (M A Fitzgerald) 7-2; 2. Phar Better 10-11 fav; 3. Chicago City 100-30. 9 ran. 6, 4. (N Henderson). Tote: £4.10; £1.10, £1.20, £1.30. DF: £3.10. CSF: £6.30. Trio: £2.10.

2.40: 1. MAJORS LEGACY (A Thornton) 11-4; 2. Penncaler 14-1; 3. Greville Again 4-1. 8 ran. 5-2 fav Knight's Crest (pulled up). 14, sht-hd. (T Forster). Tote: £3.60; £1.10, £3.20, £1.40. DF: £31.30. CSF: £33.88. Tricast: £136.90. Trio: £36.30. NRs: Cool Runner, Mountain Path, Spring To Glory.

3.10: 1. TIDEBROOK (N Williamson) 2-1 jt fav; 2. Mister Oddy 2-1 jt fav; 3. Coolteen Hero 8-1. 5 ran. 19, 4. (K Bailey). Tote: £3.10; £1.30, £1.60. DF: £2.80. CSF: £5.67.

3.40: 1. THE PROMS (C Llewellyn) 11-2; 2. Flaxley Wood 7-2; 3. Green Crusader 4-1. 7 ran. 5-2 fav Ernest William (4th). 7, 1¼. (N Twiston-Davies). Tote: £6.90; £2.60, £1.80. DF: £12.90. CSF: £23.47. Tricast: £77.71. NR: Native Shore.

4.10: 1. EARTHMOVER (Miss P Gundry) 8-15 fav; 2. Holland House 15-8; 3. Mighty Falcon 14-1. 5 ran. Dist, dist. (R Barber). Tote: £1.50; £1.10, £1.40. DF: £1.50. CSF: £1.83. NR: Vital Song.

4.40: 1. PEVERIL PENDRAGON (S Fox) 33-1; 2. Guilder 6-4 fav; 3. Foreign Rule 9-2. 7 ran. 1, ¾. (G Balding). Tote: £40.60; £8.60, £1.40. DF: £42.00. CSF: £73.87. Trio: £29.00. NRs: Announcing, Meteor Strike, Spy Knoll, Time Project, West And Sea.

5.10: 1. ROYAL ARCTIC (Chris Webb) 3-1 fav; 2. Lyphard's Fable 10-1; 3. Country Minstrel 10-1. 7 ran. 5, 4. (S Mellor). Tote: £3.50; £2.90, £2.60. DF: £18.70. CSF: £26.79. Tricast: £234.97. Trio: £91.40. NRs: Guest Alliance, Pealings.

Placepot: £12.80. **Quadpot:** £7.40. **Place 6:** £11.38. **Place 5:** £11.00.

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LIVE COMMENTARIES		RESULTS
NEWBURY	971	981
DONCASTER	972	982
WARWICK	973	983
HUNTINGDON	974	984
WOLVERHAMPTON (E)	975	985

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Supposin fires Rowe's Champion dreams

A fledgeling trainer will be shaking with fear when he saddles Britain's best hope for the Champion Hurdle, but for him that is part of the pleasure. **Richard Edmondson** reports

IT WAS probably when he heard the gelding shears being sharpened on the grindstone that I'm Supposin decided to run quite quickly at Wincanton last week.

The Kingwell Hurdle was his last chance to show a glint of the form that had made him an outrageously expensive purchase from Kevin Prendergast's yard. Otherwise, the glint would almost certainly have been coming from the surgeon's hand. Given this mind-concentrating option, I'm Supposin ran as if someone had cracked a hornet's nest behind him. He bolted in by 19 lengths to establish himself as Britain's leading contender for the Champion Hurdle. A posting at stud remains among his future career prospects.

"He is at an age that we were wondering whether he was thinking about mares more than racing," Richard Rowe, the six-year-old's trainer, says. "If this season had been a total disaster, and he showed he had lost his form completely, gelding would have been a consideration. Someone must have had a word with the horse before Wincanton.

"He's had his tackle a long time and I think he'd really miss it now. If he can go and win at Cheltenham the family jewels will certainly be safe."

And so will Rowe's stewardship of the horse. I'm Supposin was lured from his homeland by Nicholas Cooper, a wealthy figure in the world of insurance. He was considerably less affluent after the purchase, however. I'm Supposin's price has not been trawled on a banner behind a plane for public consumption, but a figure of around £200,000 would not be wildly inaccurate.

Cooper chose not to put the horse with one of the sultans of the game but rather a relative water carrier in Rowe. "As I read it he was given a chance to make a go of life in his younger days and he's doing the same thing for someone else," the ex-jockey says. "I'm just lucky enough to be that someone."

Five runs into the partnership there was not even a sniff of a victory and vultures were leaving the branches. And then came Wincanton. "I was proud of the horse on the day because the old boy didn't let me down when it mattered," Rowe says. "I've only known Nicholas for three years and I'm sure it's been very difficult for him to have trust in me and believe what I'm telling him.

"He's been absolutely marvellous. When his trainer tells him the horse is absolutely flying, a very good horse who is probably the best hurdler in the country and then it finishes fifth of six he must wonder what he is being told.

"I can ride the horse work and the horse himself tells me how good he is. Nicholas hasn't got that advantage. Every time the horse has run there were reasons why he didn't win and they weren't made-up excuses. I've still got a few of those to rely on."

Before the Kingwell, I'm Supposin was 80-1 with Ladbrokes to win both that race and the Champion Hurdle. Now he is as low as 5-1 to win the second leg with only the Irish horse, Istabraq, ahead of him in the market. Pressure remains on his trainer, though now it is generated by expectancy. This has not, however, led to jibbering insomnia at the Ashleigh House stables in West Sussex.

"There's no point worrying about the day itself because we haven't got there yet," Rowe said. "Of course, when I walk into that racecourse a week on Tuesday I'm going to get tense.

"You want to get tense anyway because that's part of the fun of it. It's strange when you're standing there with owners shaking with worry as the horse is going down and realising that is part of the pleasure. If you don't get that buzz it's a waste of time owning horses. That's why I packed up riding. I lost the buzz. It became just a job."

Richard Rowe was a good jockey who registered 555 winners, among them Shady Deal in the Whitbread Gold Cup and Deep Sensation in the Schweppes. One winter's day at Fontwell, though, he realised the game was up. "February 18th, 1991," he says.

Rowe lost the passion for race-riding and soon after he retired he realised he had lost something else as well. If the man wasn't sitting so close to the knife and cleaver draw in his kitchen you might suggest that his bottle had gone. But then he does it for you. "Three weeks after I retired, a horse I was training for hunter chases had to be schooled," he says. "I went to jump a schooling fence and I just couldn't do it.

"I suppose I would have to say it was fear. I certainly didn't ride my last race thinking I was frightened, but if someone asked me to go and jump a fence now there's no way I could do it. I'd have to have two or three very large vodka and tonics." Rowe has not been persuaded to take to the bottle and neither has he crossed a single fence since the day he retired.

At 38 he is still a tadpole in training terms, but Rowe will almost certainly move to a bigger pond if I'm Supposin translates his home form to Prestbury Park. "He's Group class on the Flat so when he works, even on a bad day, with jumping horses he makes them look ordinary," the trainer says. "We have to use two horses to work him with and jump one in at halfway to make him go along a bit.

"He likes to lengthen up into a stride and you have to wind him up into top gear rather than asking him to go from slow to fast very quickly."

The numbers have been accelerating swiftly too at Ashleigh House. The yard is now up to its complement of 40 horses and there will be others offered if I'm Supposin carries the stable's ensign successfully at the Festival. Team Rowe believe they are up to the job.

"Nicholas Cooper has been good enough to send us a horse that is capable of winning a Champion Hurdle," the trainer says. "Now it's up to us to prove we can do it, which I think we can. My only real worry all season has not been our skill or how good I'm Supposin is, but how long Nicholas would keep watching his horse get beat. Because he's stuck with me I take my hat off to him."

I'm Supposin himself trusts that will be the only thing removed at the Ashleigh House stables.



Rowe and I'm Supposin: 'If someone asked me to jump a fence now I'd have to have two or three large vodka and tonics' Photograph: Robert Hallam

Toiseach on an upward trend

By Richard Edmondson

JAMES FANSHAWE, the Group-winning Flat trainer, has a strange affection for racing over jumps considering the pursuit almost killed him.

In his point-to-pointing youth Fanshawe came a quite horrible cropper at Cottenham, breaking his neck and almost his connection with life itself. He does not bear a grudge though.

Indeed, the Newmarket man has enjoyed conspicuous success with National Hunt horses. Fanshawe did much to smooth over Kribensis's switch from summer to winter games, especially during the campaign in which he won the Triumph Hurdle, even though Michael Stoute was officially the grey's trainer. Then, in 1992, Fanshawe's own name was up in lights when Royal Gait won the Champion Hurdle.

The Toiseach, who runs at Doncaster today, may not be as talented as that pair but he does carry the distinction of being Fanshawe's first winner over fences. "When you've got a nice horse to train like this one, be it Flat or jumps, it's bloody good fun," the trainer said yesterday.

There are doubts today about the seven-year-old, even though he won a prestige event quite tidily at Ascot last time. "The Reynoldstown wasn't an epic race this year, even though we won it really well, and the ground will be different tomorrow," Fanshawe said. "He acts so well on the faster ground that it has got to be a a slight worry that the rain has come."

RICHARD EDMONDSON
NAP: Real Tonic
(Doncaster 3.35)
NB: Ardrina
(Doncaster 3.05)

There is also the small matter of five rivals to overcome. No Saturday long-distance chase seems to go by without the participation of a horse from Paul Nicholls's yard and this afternoon is no exception as Galatasori Jane represents Manor Farm stables. She will go well.

Scotton Banks, the top weight, won a Peter Marsh Chase and a Martell Cup two seasons ago, which is a record which has not been lost on the handicapper. Despite running some stinkers since those glory days, Scotton Banks is coming down in the weights with the speed of a glacier. He hasn't moved far enough yet. **The Toiseach** (4.10), who is moving up through the weights, looks the best alternative.

In the card's other £20,000 race Anabranch attempts to continue her winning sequence for perhaps Britain's most quietly effective trainer, Malcolm Jefferson. She won a Stratford handicap off 103 in October and now finds herself on a mark of 125 and appears vulnerable. The same could be said of Native Mission, who looked as though he wanted to take up a different sport when beaten last time. A value consideration here is **REAL TONIC** (nap 3.35), who has some solid form in the book.

An interesting runner in the first televised contest is Ardrina, who won at Newcastle last month after being pulled up on her previous two outings. Asked to explain this discrepancy, trainer Ferdy Murphy said the mare appreciated the better ground, drop in class and shorter trip and had also been receiving treatment for crushed vertebrae. The stewards probably threw him out before he could get on to signs of the zodiac and extra-terrestrial influence as further evidence. If she can avoid the death ray this afternoon, **Ardrina** (next best 3.05) should win again.



GREG WOOD

THE A-Z OF BETTING

Y is for . . .

Yellow Sam: The medium of one of Barney Curley's more spectacular coups, which took place is the somewhat unlikely setting of Bellewstown racecourse back in 1975. The very remoteness of Bellewstown, however, was part of its attraction for the canny trainer, who knew that there was just one phone line into the track. Bets on Yellow Sam were placed off-course, but when the bookies tried to "blow" the money back to the course to reduce both the starting price and their liabilities, they found that the number in question was permanently engaged. The story goes that one of Curley's accomplices had insisted on making an "urgent" phone call 20 minutes before the off, and had strict instructions that he was not to replace the handset until the horses were off and running. When, rather inevitably, Yellow Sam cantered home, he did so at a far better price than would otherwise have been the case, and Curley is rumoured to have trousered £300,000 as a result of this clever ruse. This may also explain why it is that you never come across a bookie who does not own a mobile phone.

Ypsilanti: Another coup, but of a greater vintage. When Ypsilanti won the Jubilee Handicap in 1903, it marked the first successful strike by the Druids' Lodge Confederacy, the hard-hitting gamblers who terrorised bookmakers in the first decade of the century and featured in this space 21 weeks ago. In modern money, Ypsilanti won them almost £5m, having been backed from 25-1 to 7-2, which means that his backers must have staked the equivalent of at least £200,000. This alone was quite an achievement, even allowing for the fact that bookies in those days were worthy of the name and not afraid to take a serious bet. The same gamble would be effectively impossible in today's ultra-suspicious betting market, since to have any chance of getting such a sum on at 25-1, you would need to visit every betting shop in the country (there are about 9,000) and stake a little over £20 in each. Even then, a fair number would probably laugh in your face and offer you £5 at 25-1 and the rest at SP.

Yankee: The definitive multiple bet, involving four selections in six doubles, four trebles and a four-timer. Even people who have never set foot in a betting shop know that getting a Yankee up is pretty much a once-in-a-lifetime experience for most punters, and that if someone in their office pulls it off, it should be well worth accompanying them to the pub. Bookies, of course, love Yankees, since you need a 50 per cent strike-rate with your selections to receive anything back at all, and even two winners gives you just a single successful bet offset by 10 losers. The other obvious problem for thoughtful punters – since even the shrewdest will sometimes find a Saturday Yankee impossible to resist – is that you are staking the same amount on the relatively short-odds doubles as you are on the outrageously optimistic accumulator. If dabble you must, it makes more sense to take an extra minute and write the bet out with different stakes on the various elements – £2 on the doubles, perhaps, £1 on the trebles and 50p on the fourfold. If you can't be bothered, you deserve to lose.

Yah: Thirty-three per cent of the vocabulary of most drinkers in the paddockside champagne bar at Royal Ascot. (The remainder, of course, being "dahling" and "mwah").

Yarborough: A hand at whist or bridge which does not contain any card higher than a nine. It takes its name from Lord Yarborough, who along with the fellow nobleman who gave us sandwiches was a familiar figure in the gambling clubs which sprang up throughout London in the latter part of the 18th century. Yarborough would offer anyone odds of 1,000-1 against them being dealt such a hand, a price which was cheerfully snapped up by any punter with more greed than sense. Yarborough himself, though, had obviously done his homework, since the true odds against such an outcome are only a little shy of 2,000-1. Which only goes to show that you should always be suspicious of an apparently generous price, even – or perhaps particularly – if the person who is laying it owns half of Norfolk.



Can Schumacher lift the shadow?

Derick Allsop believes Michael Schumacher can regain his reputation and the world title in the new F1 season which begins in Melbourne tomorrow

Michael Schumacher (right, above) cuts across his closest rival for the world drivers' championship, Jacques Villeneuve, in last season's final race, the Grand Prix of Europe at Jerez, Spain Photograph: Allsport

WHEN you are the best racing driver in the world and make a million pounds a week you would expect to have it cracked. Reassuringly for the rest of us, life has a way of spreading its blessings and ensuring no one has everything. Michael Schumacher is living proof.

Every driver will be under intense scrutiny as another World Championship begins in Australia tomorrow, but Schumacher will be watched, pursued and analysed as no other.

Not merely because he is the best and highest paid, but because he will be required to adhere to public demands of decency and fair play.

Schumacher professes himself unconcerned whether or not he is liked. He has acknowledged he made a mistake in causing that ill-starred collision with Jacques Villeneuve at the 1997 Grand Prix of Europe, but maintains it was not a deliberate foul act.

Furthermore, he contends, he has paid his dues, having been stripped of second place in the championship and his points, although not his wins from last year. Many question the punishment and attitudes towards the 29-year-old German have hardened.

Schumacher claims the majority of fans are still with him and that his critics overlook his positive contribution to grand prix racing. "They don't wish to talk about my wins or any other achievements before the incident at Jerez," he says. "That is the disappointing part for me."

That seems also to contradict his insistence he is indifferent to public opinion. The fact is that he is more sensitive than he wishes to admit. He keeps tabs on his press, television and radio coverage around the world. He has potential interviewers screened and exploits his media platform whenever he needs to.

A confidant said: "Michael has been genuinely shocked by all the negative publicity he has had. He didn't realise it would cause such strong feelings against him. I think he and Ferrari misread that whole situation.

"If they had been more open and honest from the start and Michael had apologised and accepted the responsibility in Jerez it would not have been so bad. But he and the Ferrari people spent a lot of time deciding what they would say and in the end they made it worse."

In his self-consciousness, and so many other ways, Schumacher is very much like the late Ayrton Senna. He is not as emotional as the Brazilian but is driven by the same commitment and has achieved a similar standard in Formula One. He is the imperfect genius of the day.

Senna, too, would resort to desperate tactics to protect his status. He speared Alain Prost off the track in 1990 in an assault far more violent and dangerous than Schumacher's. Twelve months earlier Prost had, at a safer juncture, taken out Senna.

Like Senna, a compulsion has carried Schumacher to the top and, like Senna, his ruthlessness is a great strength but also a destructive weakness.

Senna is, above all, remembered for his brilliance and Schumacher will be if, as he promises, he does not repeat his indiscretion. Schumacher said: "I am sure all of this will be forgotten after a few races and there are other talking points for everyone. The best way I can stop the talk is by winning races."

Precisely so, and this is the season long scheduled to herald Ferrari's return to the pinnacle of Formula One. Alas for Schumacher, and his team, their forward planning has been blurred by developments in the winter.

Ferrari have concentrated their test work away from tracks used by their opponents, leaving the outside world to guess at their potential. Some reports from Italy indicated dissatisfaction with the car's performance.

Equally disconcerting for Schumacher has been the form of the new McLaren-Mercedes. He will have anticipated an increasing threat after the team's advance last season, but their times in pre-season testing surpassed most expectations.

Schumacher said: "McLaren will be the biggest danger to us. It is clear they are going to be very strong this year. My concern is how our Goodyear tyres will compare with the Bridgestones of McLaren and Benetton."

He is of course, a master of pre-race psychology, shifting the burden of expectation on to others. He states the championship is not his duty, merely his goal.

"Of course the expectation in our team and in Italy is high, and that puts a lot of responsibility on my shoulders, but that just makes me more motivated."

Since Williams are unlikely to become a second-rate team overnight, Schumacher could have an even more intense fight on his hands than last year. He will probably be facing hostilities on at least two fronts this time.

The challenge just might inspire him to greater heights. If either, or both, Williams and McLaren weaken their prospects of the individual title by persisting with a policy of running joint No 1 drivers, then Schumacher, supported by Eddie Irvine, is best equipped to capitalise.

No driver is as complete as Schumacher. He is not simply quick, but able to generate competitive speed at any circuit instantly. His strategy and his ability to change strategy according to race circumstances or track conditions place him apart from the rest.

Patrick Head, Williams' technical director, says: "Schumacher has this habit of going very fast on his first run in practice so that his name goes to the top of the time sheets and everyone gasps. It's all part of his psychology. He's big on psychology."

He is also big on wet tracks as he demonstrated at Monaco and Spa last year to embarrass Villeneuve and Williams.

Head said: "Jacques knows this season the step he's got to take is being able to drive in all conditions and have an input before and during the race. He goes incommunicado once he's in the car on the grid and you can't do that when rain clouds are coming over.

"He's got to be right in there and switched on. I don't blame him for our mistakes last season, but he played a part in those mistakes by not being part of the decision-making process. Unlike Schumacher. In fact, Schumacher makes most of the decisions at Ferrari. Jacques needs to beat Schumacher in a wet race to prove how good he is."

Ron Dennis, having hauled McLaren out of their recent trough, is conscious, too, that Schumacher's powers of improvisation are unrivalled in modern racing. "Michael has achieved great results in adverse conditions," Dennis said. "After Michael there is a whole range of drivers with similar ability."

According to Frank Williams, it gets up Villeneuve's nose to hear constant eulogies to Schumacher, while other drivers maintain the German cannot lose, since he takes the credit for any victory and Ferrari the blame for any defeat.

That is true, yet surely it is the ultimate tribute to Schumacher. Only Senna, in recent times has attained such immunity. And it would be no bad thing for Formula One to have its outstanding driver reinstated as world champion.

1998 GP Calendar

8 March	Australia
29 March	Brazil
12 April	Argentina
26 April	San Marino
10 May	Spain
24 May	Monaco
7 June	Canada
12 July	Great Britain
26 July	Austria
2 August	Germany
16 August	Hungary
30 August	Belgium
13 September	Italy
27 September	Luxembourg
11 October*	
1 November	Japan

Portuguese GP cancelled. May be replaced by either South Africa or China)

Ferrari fuel McLaren brake row

By David Tremayne in Melbourne

Only one day into the real start of the grand prix season and politics have already overshadowed the action on the track.

As spectators at Melbourne's Albert Park circuit watched the new-style Formula One cars in action together for the first time, and Michael Schumacher did the best job in changeable weather conditions to thrust his Ferrari ahead of the McLaren-Mercedes of Mika Hakkinen and the Williams-Mecachrome of the world champion Jacques Villeneuve, the teams were arguing over interpretations of the new regulations.

Ferrari believe that the braking system of the McLarens contravenes the regulations, and trailed their official letter to FIA, the sport's governing body, up and down the pit garages to sound out support for a protest against the British team.

McLaren are using a revised version of the asymmetrical braking system they ran last season, where braking effort to each driven wheel may be varied when a car is cornering.

A button on the steering wheel enables the driver to reduce braking effort on the outside rear wheel in a corner, thus helping the car to turn into it better and to go round it faster.

The issue is whether the McLaren system contravenes the new rules which say there must be braking on all four wheels.

"The trouble is that other teams lack imagination. They are inadequate," Ron Dennis, the chief of McLaren, said. "Throughout the winter we have been in constant dialogue with FIA regarding our technical ideas, and we are confident that everything we have incorporated on our new car is legal."

The FIA has indicated that McLaren's system is legal, but has advised other teams that they should lodge a protest if they disagree.

"Ferrari's letter offers a compelling argument," said one team owner who did not wish to be identified. "We could end up seeing a winner here who could be protested, which is the last thing that anyone wants to see."

Others believe that Ferrari has been caught napping by McLaren and that their stance is merely an attempt to destabilise the team that they believe will be their strongest rival.

AUSTRALIAN GRAND PRIX (Melbourne) First practice session: 1 M Schumacher (Ger) Ferrari 1:33.828; 2 M Hakkinen (Fin) McLaren-Mercedes 1:34.432; 3 J Villeneuve (Canada) Williams-Mecachrome 1:35.023; 4 A Wurz (Aut) Benetton-Mecachrome 1:35.270; 5 D Coulthard (GB) McLaren-Mercedes 1:35.409; 6 R Schumacher (Ger) Jordan-Mugen-Honda 1:35.708; 7 J Herbert (GB) Sauber-Petronas1:35.878; 8 J Alesi (Fr) Sauber-Petronas 1:36.095; 9 J Trulli (It) Prost-Peugeot 1:36.231; 10 HH Frentzen (Ger) Williams-Mecachrome 1:36.574; 11 M Salo (Fin) Arrows-Yamaha 1:36.887; 12 R Barrichello (Bra) Stewart-Ford 1:37.023; 13 D Hill (GB) Jordan-Mugen-Honda 1:37.202; 14 O Panis (Fr) Prost-Peugeot 1:37.302; 15 R Rosset (Bra) Tyrrell-Ford 1:37.444; 16 J Magnussen (Den) Stewart-Ford 1:37.605; 17 E Irvine (GB) Ferrari 1:27.891; 18 P Diniz (Bra) Arrows-Yamaha 1:37.928; 19 T Takagi (Japan) Tyrrell-Ford 1:38.817; 20 G Fisichella (It) Benetton-Mecachrome 1:38.890; 21 S Nakano (Japan) Minardi-Ford 1:39.044; 22 E Tuero (Arg) Minardi-Ford 2:16.609.

How the teams line up for the 1998 Formula One season

Williams



Jacques Villeneuve (Can)
Age: 26
GPs: 33
Wins: 11
World Championships: 1

Heinz-Harald Frentzen (Ger)
Age: 30.
GPs: 65.
Wins: 1.
World Championships: 0.



Manchester United Formula One – now appropriately in red – always seem to have strength in depth and desire to see off pretenders to their throne. The car is again bound to be competitive and the team insists the engine, although no longer a Renault in name, will be as potent as ever. Both drivers should benefit from their year together in the team and Villeneuve is adamant he has the motivation to retain his championship.

Ferrari



Michael Schumacher (Ger)
Age: 29.
GPs: 102.
Wins: 27.
World Championships: 2.

Eddie Irvine (N Irl)
Age: 32.
GPs: 65.
Wins: 0.
World Championships: 0.



According to the long established game plan, this is the year Ferrari hall their first world champion since 1979. Anything less would be unacceptable in Italy and possibly cost the team the services of Schumacher next year. The German remains their greatest asset and he will be eager to put behind him the Jerez affair. Ferrari's preference for private testing has shrouded their potential in mystery, but they should be serious contenders.

Benetton



Giancarlo Fisichella (It)
Age: 25.
GPs: 25.
Wins: 0.
World Championships: 0.

Alexander Wurz (Aut)
Age: 24.
GPs: 3.
Wins: 0.
World Championships: 0.



The team led to prominence by Michael Schumacher will be hoping the first two years without him are proved to have been the worst. Now under the guidance of David Richards following the departure of Flavio Briatore, there is a sense of rejuvenation in the camp. They have two young, gifted drivers, although their inexperience could be exposed to their cost. Richards is banking on a switch from Goodyear to Bridgestone tyres to give them additional momentum.

McLaren



Mika Hakkinen (Fin)
Age: 29.
GPs: 96.
Wins: 1.
World Championships: 0.

David Coulthard (GB)
Age: 29.
GPs: 26.
Wins: 3.
World Championships: 0.



The hot tip for success this year after producing impressively quick times in testing. Much will depend on whether Mercedes can match power with the requisite reliability. The other top team to have opted for Bridgestone rubber and they are confident they have made the right choice. Two talented, ambitious drivers still young enough and hungry enough. There is a real belief in the team they can win the championship for the first time since 1991.

Jordan

Damon Hill (GB)
Age: 37. GPs: 84. Wins: 21.
World Championships: 1.

Ralf Schumacher (Ger)
Age: 22. GPs: 17. Wins: 0.
World Championships: 0.

Eddie Jordan's team have been knocking on the door of the major league but may be no nearer forcing it open. Hill has discounted a championship challenge and could have an interesting scrap with the younger Schumacher.

Prost

Olivier Panis (Fr)
Age: 31. GPs: 59. Wins: 1.
World Championships: 0.

Jarno Trulli (It)
Age: 23. GPs: 14. Wins: 0.
World Championships: 0

Alain Prost's team look to have the better of the engine exchange with Jordan, but have had their problems in pre-season, not least satisfying crash test regulations. Should eventually be a competitive package.

Sauber

Jean Alesi (Fr)
Age: 33. GPs: 135. Wins: 1.
World Championships: 0.

Johnny Herbert (GB)
Age: 33. GPs: 133. Wins: 2.
World Championships: 0

The Swiss team have the resources and professed desire to reach the upper echelon, although hitches in testing have frustrated the drivers. An exciting driver pairing should keep everyone on their toes.

Arrows

Pedro Diniz (Bra)
Age: 27. GPs: 50. Wins: 0.
World Championships: 0.

Mika Salo (Fin)
Age: 31. GPs: 52. Wins: 0.
World Championships: 0.

Tom Walkinshaw's ambitions know no bounds. Having revamped this team and recruited John Barnard he has now embarked upon his own engine programme. Has a gifted replacement for Hill in Salo, but faces a hard season.

Stewart

Rubens Barrichello (Bra)
Age: 25. GPs: 81. Wins: 0.
World Championships: 0.

Jan Magnussen (Den)
Age: 24. GPs: 18. Wins: 0.
World Championships: 0.

Ford will expect a significant step forward by their factory team, who would have appreciated a fuller test programme. There is much talk of the car's potential, but it desperately needs more running.

Tyrrell

Ricardo Rosset (Bra)
Age: 29. GPs: 0. Wins: 0.
World Championships: 0.

Toranosuke Takagi (Japan)
Age: 24. GPs: 16. Wins: 0.
World Championships: 0.

The squabble between past and present bosses, Ken Tyrrell and Craig Pollock, has overshadowed a promising build-up. While the appointment of Rosset in preference to Jos Verstappen has dismayed Tyrrell, Takagi has been a revelation.

Minardi

Shinji Nakano (Japan)
Age: 26. GPs: 17. Wins: 0.
World Championships: 0.

Esteban Tuero (Arg)
Age: 19. GPs: 0. Wins: 0.
World Championships: 0.

The other Italian team have bold plans to rebuild this year and eventually upgrade, but they are again favourites for the wooden spoon. A doubtful driver line-up can scarcely help bolster confidence in the camp.

Ireland brace themselves to withstand French barrage

By Simon Turnbull
in Paris

WARREN GATLAND has taken exception with those who have chosen to describe Ireland's first visit to the Stade de France this afternoon as futile. It certainly promises to be a far from pointless exercise. That is the problem facing Ireland's new coach.

Having put 51 points on the Murrayfield board two weeks ago, France will be looking to complete the seventh and penultimate leg of their back-to-back Grand Slam bid with another barrage of points, this time at the expense of an Irish team embarking on what only time will determine as a new era or just another error.

Never before has a team started hotter favourites for a Five Nations' match. At 33-1 on, France have already set one record. By the time the stadium's electronic scoreboard gets to rest at the end of the afternoon (presuming, that is, it has not blown a fuse from overwork), the French cockerel may well be crowing about another landmark achievement.

The 60 points England scored against Wales the afternoon. France set about the Scots, a Five Nations' record, is certain to be in the forefront of Gallic minds come kick-off. Not that anyone in the home camp will admit as much.

The hardest task for France this week has been playing down their own expectations and playing up the Irish as participants in something other than a Paris mismatch. Jo Maso has spent more time on the back foot, metaphorically at least, than he ever did as an attacking centre for France.

"We can't take anything for granted," the French manager said. "Any nation is capable of surprising another. Ireland will be fired up by a new coach. We expect them to throw everything at us for the first half-hour."

The trouble is Ireland have precious little to throw. As the former Irish stand-off Tony Ward lamented last week: "Irish rugby has never been more poorly endowed. We have never been so bereft of talent."

FIVE NATIONS' CHAMPIONSHIP

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
France	2	2	0	0	75	33	4
England	2	1	0	1	77	50	2
Scotland	2	1	0	1	33	67	2
Ireland	1	0	0	1	16	17	0
Wales	1	0	0	1	26	60	0

Remaining fixtures: 21 March Ireland v Wales (Lansdowne Rd). 22 March Scotland v England (Murrayfield). 4 April England v Ireland (Twickenham). 5 April Wales v France (Wembley).

Gatland, a former New Zealand hooker installed as Brian Ashton's successor 11 days ago, has had to dip into the Third Division of the All-Ireland League to come up with a third man for the back row he has completely revamped.

Like Gatland himself, though, Andy Ward happens to be another Kiwi in Celt's clothing. He will need to show the pedigree of a New Zealander this afternoon.

And if Ireland are not to be buried without trace, Eric Elwood will need to play like the half-back "general" and points-kicking machine Gatland portrayed when announcing the return of the Galwegian to No 10. Elwood may be limited as an offensive outside-half, but he can batten down the hatches and play the percentage game.

"Of course we're rank outsiders," Gatland said. "Ireland's record in Paris is depressing, but I'm trying to eliminate all negative thoughts from the squad. Words like futile have been used about our visit, but if we can be disciplined, creative and get a work ethic going we can come away with something far higher than the public expects."

Even the most hopeful green-tinted scenario would still fall some way short of bridging the gap since Ireland last won in Paris. That was in 1972 in the Stade Colombes against a team which included Jean-Claude Skrela and Pierre Villepreux of Toulouse, twin masterminds of the brilliant French class of 1997-98.

Ireland have yet to concede a half-century in a Five Nations match. If today proves not to be the day, Gatland will have completed a satisfactory exercise in what has become an essential art for the coach of a Celtic nation – damage limitation.

FRANCE v IRELAND

at Stade de France

J-L Sadourny	Colomiers	15	C O'Shea	London Irish
P Bernat-Salles	Pau	14	R Wallace	Saracens
C Lamaison	Brive	13	K Maggs	Bristol
S Glas	Bourgoin	12	R Henderson	Wasps
X Garbajosa	Toulouse	11	D Hickie	St Mary's College
T Castaignède	Castres	10	E Elwood	Galwegians
P Carbonneau	Brive	9	C McGuinness	St Mary's Coll
C Califano	Toulouse	1	R Corrigan	Greystones
R Ibanez	Dax, capt	2	K Wood	Harlequins, capt
F Tournaire	Toulouse	3	P Wallace	Saracens
O Brouzet	Bègles-Bordeaux	4	P Johns	Saracens
A Pelous	Toulouse	5	M O'Kelly	London Irish
M Lièvremont	Stade Français	6	D Corkery	Bristol
O Magne	Brive	7	A Ward	Ballynahinch
T Lièvremont	Perpignan	8	V Costello	St Mary's College

Replacements: 16 R Dourthe (Dax); 17 J Aue (Castres); 18 F Galthié (Colomiers); 19 P Bernat-Salles (Agen); 20 T Cleda (Pau); 21 C Soulette (Beziers); 22 M Dal Maso (Agen).

Replacements: 16 M Lynch (Young Munster); 17 D Humphreys (London Irish); 18 B O'Meara (Cork Constitution); 19 N Popplewell (Newcastle); 20 R Nesdale (Newcastle); 21 P Clohessy (Young Munster); 22 M Galwey (Shannon).

Referee: J Fleming (Scotland)

Kick-off: 2.0 (BBC1)

Telfer sees chink of light shining on Triple Crown

The Five Nations' Championship could yet prove competitive, starting with Wales v Scotland today. **Chris Hewett** reports

EUROPEAN rugby is not so much a funny old game as a celebration of the absurd, a fact highlighted not only by the ongoing farce starring Clive Woodward and the English clubs but also by this afternoon's exercise in private Celtic grief involving Wales and Scotland. The Scots go into the game on the back of three record Murrayfield defeats in as many matches, yet a successful outcome from today's piece of Five Nations business would make their next home appearance a Triple Crown affair.

Team sport simply does not get much more bizarre, especially as Jim Telfer, the Scottish coach, conceded yesterday that the only Sassenach he definitely expected to recognise in Edinburgh in a fortnight's time was Woodward himself. It would be stretching a point to suggest that Telfer was glorying in England's present political crisis, but there were definite signs of a smirk on the old granite features.

"I haven't thought that far ahead, but there is an incentive there in the sense that we still have something tangible to play for in this championship," he agreed. "I've heard all the comment about the Five Nations and the gap between England, France and the rest. But if you look at the Welsh and look at ourselves, there are high-class players on both sides.

"People seem to have forgotten last summer's Lions tour and the fact that there were nine Celts in the side that won the Test series. Now, that was a good few months ago and it's true to say that many of the Lions who performed so outstandingly against the Springboks have under-performed during the current British season. But I still stand by the fact that the Celtic nations have made a tremendous contribution to rugby in these islands for many, many years and will continue to do so."

Nothing would reinforce Telfer's deeply held faith in the broad church of northern hemisphere rugby more strongly than an explosion of Celtic craft and colour in the unfamiliar surroundings of Wembley this afternoon. The omens are good; Wales-Scotland matches are firmly rooted in the harum-scarum tradition and, while both countries lack the physical clout to mix it with the big boys, the opportunity to revel in each other's mutual deficiencies usually guarantees a spectacle of sorts.

"The Welsh have made a large number of changes and they've made them for a reason," said the Scottish coach. "How do those changes impact on us? We'll have to see. It seems to me that they've gone for a livelier, more mobile pack, but the imagination, the heart of their operation, remains with the half-backs and centres, all of whom I enjoyed working with on the Lions tour. I admire those players and, in a way, I fear them for the things I know they can achieve.

"For all that, I consider us to be a very fit side with the ability to last the full 80 at a fast pace. Although we didn't do ourselves justice against the French a fortnight ago – we were tactically poor and we leaked three or four soft tries as a result – I'm happy that we can do the job this time. I must admit that a Triple Crown game with England would have plenty to recommend it from our point of view."

The Scots suspect that some of the personnel changes implemented by Kevin Bowring, the Welsh coach, have a lingering capacity to backfire in a big way. Arwel Thomas, such an inspired tormentor at Murrayfield last year, is no longer around to pull the strings for Scott Gibbs and Allan Bateman and there are serious question marks over the balance of the Dragons' reshaped back row – a traditional area of strength for the Scots.

Bowring has tinkered with the front row, too; having spent all week bemoaning the lack of passion and discipline shown by his team at Twickenham a fortnight back, his solution centres on a recall for the Swansea hooker, Garin Jenkins. No one doubts Jenkins' phenomenal reserves of pure, undiluted passion, but discipline? Crikey. The selectors might as well have picked little Arwel for his muscle or Shirley Bassey for her stoicism. Jenkins and discipline go together like bread and blancmange.

We should, however, have a genuine scrap on our hands whatever the outcome and, heaven knows, the championship needs it. As Finlay Calder, the former Scotland and Lions captain, remarked this week, no one enjoys parting with £30 to watch a turkey shoot rather than a rugby match.

Unlike today's alleged contest between France and Ireland in Paris, this one is too close to call with any confidence. The weather has turned nicely for the Scots, however, and if they scrummage their weight and hit Doddie Weir in the line-out, a most unlikely Triple Crown will still be a possibility come 5.30 this afternoon.

WALES v SCOTLAND

at Wembley Stadium

K Morgan	Pontypridd	15	D Lee	London Scottish
W Proctor	Llanelli	14	T Stanger	Hawick
A Bateman	Richmond	13	G Townsend	Northampton
S Gibbs	Swansea	12	A Tait	Newcastle
G Thomas	Cardiff	11	S Longstaff	Dundee HSFP
N Jenkins	Pontypridd	10	C Chalmers	Melrose
R Howley	Cardiff, capt	9	G Armstrong	Newcastle, capt
A Lewis	Cardiff	1	D Hilton	Bath
G Jenkins	Swansea	2	G Bulloch	West of Scotland
D Young	Cardiff	3	M Stewart	Northampton
M Voyle	Llanelli	4	D Cronin	Wasps
A Moore	Swansea	5	D Weir	Newcastle
R Appleyard	Swansea	6	R Wainwright	Dundee HSFP
K Jones	Ebbw Vale	7	A Roxburgh	Kelso
C Charvis	Swansea	8	E Peters	Bath

Replacements: 16 L Davies (Cardiff); 17 A Thomas (Swansea); 18 P John (Pontypridd); 19 S Quinnell (Richmond); 20 S Ray (Pontypridd); 21 L Mustoe (Cardiff); 22 J Humphreys (Cardiff).

Replacements: 16 R Shepherd (Melrose); 17 C Murray (Hawick); 18 A Nicol (Bath); 19 I Smith (Moseley); 20 S Grimes (Watsonians); 21 G Graham (Newcastle); 22 G Ellis (Currie).

Referee: J Dumé (France)

Kick-off: 4.00 (BBC1)



The Scotland rugby players (from left) Gordon Bulloch, David Hilton and Shaun Longstaff try their football skills at Wembley yesterday Photograph: Allsport

Celtic nations need to regroup

The Five Nations balance of power has moved to England and France. **Chris Hewett** assesses the response to that shift

BARRY JOHN used to begin his after-dinner addresses with a devastating one-liner that not only evoked the feathery touch and waspish wit of his halcyon days as the most revered Welsh outside-half of them all, but also captured an entire nation's dismissive attitude towards the so-called rugby habitually played by their nearest and dearest from the wrong side of the Severn. "We were messing about in training one afternoon," he would say, a cheeky grin working its way across his darkly angelic features. "We must have been playing England the next day."

Back in the late Seventies, a Welshman had good reason to assume it would be ever thus. The ancient foe engaged in 16 Five Nations jamborees between 1964 and 1979 and in all that time, England scraped one win and a couple of jammy draws. It was nothing out of the ordinary for Wales to win five off the reel and a 30-point victory left no one in urgent need of shock therapy. You could set your clock by Wales' annual plucking of the wan and withered red rose.

Yet now that the pluckers are themselves being plucked sideways, the prophets of doom are shouting the house down. The Five Nations is dead, they say. Expired, gone to meet its maker, an ex-championship. The Celtic nations might just as well stay at home and save themselves 80 minutes of ritual humiliation, for they have about as much future as a Kuwaiti ski-jumper. Wales versus Scotland at Wembley? Make way for rugby's first So What? international.

And on the face of it, they have a point: England have lost only six of their last 30 matches against Ireland, Scotland and Wales and what is more, they have registered record victories over each in the twinkling of a calendar year. France, the only other European power remotely capable of giving the All Blacks or Springboks a game of anything more physical than crazy golf, are equally rampant. Depressingly, the odds on Les Tricolores sticking 100 points on Ireland in Paris this afternoon are a miserly 16-1.

But at least the cocksure jibes from the Twickenham terraces are having the right sort of effect on the poor cousins from the north and west. Terry Cobner, the Pontypool flanker who once reduced a strong Lions pack to tears with his inspiring dressing-room rhetoric, agrees that Wales have ground to make up but flatly refuses to accept the mantle of also-rans, despite that 60-point mauling at Twickers a fortnight ago. Now director of rugby across the bridge, he insists the Five Nations is alive and kicking.

"Look, we didn't hear people bleating about the state of the championship when we were beating England in our sleep, did we?" he snaps. "I know a lot of English rugby folk – I even mix socially with them now and again – and I'll tell you the one thing I can't stand about them. It's their bloody sympathy. We may have conceded 60 points but we don't need pity, least of all from those we used to see off year after year.

"I think the most passionate Welshman realised, even back in the Seventies, that once the English got themselves organised and started to use the vast resources at their disposal, they would become a force in world rugby. Sure enough, they have adapted well to professionalism – at least, they have in terms of what happens on the pitch. They have handled the transition better than us and it's showing in their results. However, big scores are quite common at the moment and as the Super 12 tournament down south has proved, it is perfectly possible to reverse them."

Cobner quite rightly believes that the latest trends among international referees, particularly those New Zealanders and Australians cutting new teeth on the try-laden candy-floss of Super 12, are directly responsible for many of the hopelessly lop-sided scorelines. "I can't say I enjoy seeing 12 tries and 80-odd points a game and some of my contemporaries would turn in their graves at the very thought of it," he says.

"We've been brought to this situation by people whose overriding concern has been to provide a mass audience with what they assume they want to see. It's very hard to defend these days because there are referees who stack everything in favour of the side in possession. Rather like William Webb Ellis at Rugby School, they are showing a fine disregard for the rules of the game. Until they start refereeing according to the charter agreed by the International Board, we'll get these daft scores. But it will sort itself out soon enough and then we'll see place with the same degree of success. Sure, the English are at each others' throats behind the scenes, but the power struggle doesn't seem to be affecting either the quality of player they are producing or the quality of rugby they're turning out on the pitch.

"And yes, I agree that defending against a more physically powerful side is becoming increasingly difficult. Any power differential, any inherent disparity, is cruelly exposed nowadays, to the extent that if the stronger side does everything right from, say, a set scrum, they really ought to score every time. Rugby is not like football, where an overmatched team can fall back in numbers and keep down the score very effectively.

"But there is absolutely no reason why the Scots, the Welsh and the Irish shouldn't regroup, build themselves up and come again. European rugby needs us to be competitive and we will be, provided we sort ourselves out off the field and get our structures correct. The Five Nations, or Six Nations as it will soon become, has a great deal going for it."

Wainwright, an army doctor by profession, does fear for the future of one tournament, however. "I worry about what may happen at next year's World Cup," he admits. "It's not so much a concern about competitive credibility or ridiculous scorelines, but about personal safety. We're going to get some pretty under-powered sides in the tournament and they will find themselves playing some very powerful outfits indeed. I hope I'm wrong, but injuries could blight the whole tournament. People could get badly hurt if they're not very careful."

After a fortnight of funereal mutterings about the whys and wherefores of a top-heavy Five Nations, Wainwright's warning sounds a strikingly different note. Rugby may take itself far too seriously far too often, but every now and again it is confronted by an issue of genuine gravity. This one needs addressing, and quickly.



Terry Cobner (arm extended) faces Scotland in Wales' happier 1970s Photograph: Huw Evans

Rob Wainwright, capped 31 times by Scotland and a Test Lion last summer, is equally offended at being labelled an irrelevance. "One swallow doesn't make a summer and one round of results like those of a fortnight ago doesn't wipe out a championship like the Five Nations," he asserts. "England were pretty desperate 20 years ago while the Welsh were quite the opposite. These things go in cycles.

"I do think England and France are making their numerical advantage pay at the moment and certainly in Scotland, we've found it hard to put our professional structures in whether the Five Nations is a waste of time."

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AROUND THE RESORTS

Resort	Comment	Area open	Last snow	Lwr cm	Upp cm	Forecast
ANDORRA						
Ansnal	Best skiing around midday	100%	23.2	55	90	Clear
AUSTRIA						
Niederau	Wet snow by afternoon	85%	01.3	0	60	Unsettled
BULGARIA						
Borovets	Skiing only on upper slopes	40%	29.12	0	35	Changeable
CANADA						
Tremblant	Firm packed conditions	95%	05.03	035	190	Snow flurries
FRANCE						
Chatel	Spring-like conditions	80%	05.3	10	90	Cloud building
ITALY						
Folgaria	Some lower runs closed	60%	23.2	60	120	Light snow
NORWAY						
Hemsedal	Packed and groomed conditions	95%	25.12	50	50	Bright spells
SPAIN						
Formigal	Best on upper slopes	90%	31.12	20	140	Sunny
SWITZERLAND						
Leysin	Spring-like snow conditions	95%	01.3	0	55	Cloudy
UNITED STATES						
Aspen	Fresh powder all levels	100%	05.3	160	190	Partly cloudy

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Steel city warms to its ice warriors

When it comes to American-style razzmatazz, few do it better in Britain than the Sheffield Steelers. The Superleague ice hockey team have been one of the great successes of the sport in this country and have rapidly developed substantial support in the Yorkshire city.

Cheerleaders, music, noise and colour are all key parts of the Steelers experience. The fans clearly enjoy it and over the years the players have repaid the supporters' faith with considerable success on the ice. This season, however, the Steelers have had their problems. The club are up for sale and their sixth place in the Superleague is disappointing by their own high standards.

Where the Steelers have been hoping to maintain their dominance is in the play-offs. The Steelers have reigned in the end-of-season competition since 1994.

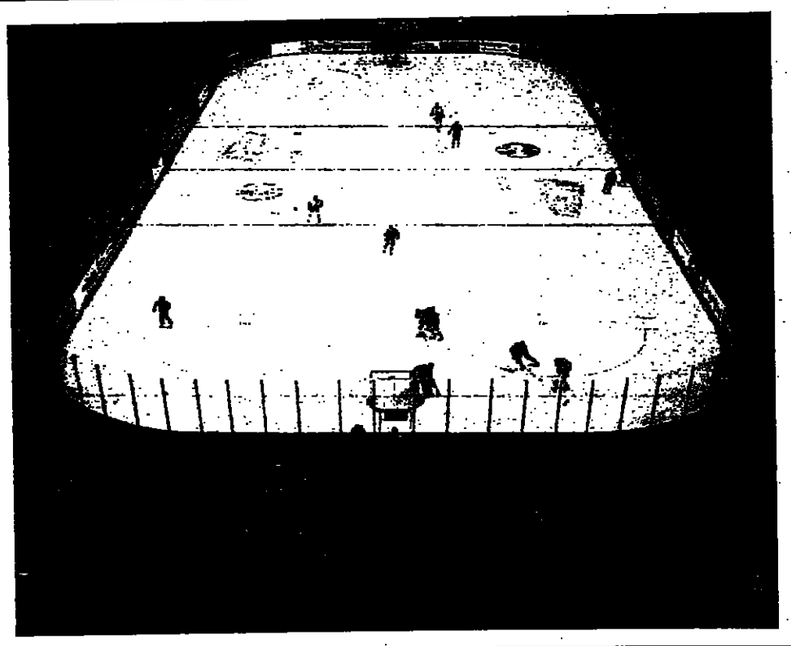
In their opening play-offs match last weekend the Steelers lost 4-3 to Newcastle Cobras but in Sunday's match – pictured here – against Nottingham Panthers they showed they can still reach the heights. Despite being 2-0 down at the end of the second period, the Steelers recovered to win 3-2. The winning goal came in overtime.

Copies of these photographs – and any others by the Independent's sports photographers David Ashdown, Peter Jay and Robert Hallam – can be ordered by telephoning 0171-293-2534.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER JAY













Stortford's fresh start as the field of dreams moves out of town



MIKE ROWBOTTOM

ON A MOVING TRIBUTE

ONE of those odd little coincidences occurred this week. While paying my paper bill (accountants please note) my eye was taken by a booklet recounting the history of the local football team, Bishop's Stortford, whose ground has been bought up by property developers.

Glancing through the pages, I heard a familiar Yorkshire voice behind me, asking if the racing papers had come in. It was John Radford, ex-Arsenal and England, ex-Bishop's Stortford too, although he remains the club's general manager.

The Blues' recent upheaval has had a tangible effect upon Radford's life: his garage is now filled with bar equipment salvaged from the old clubhouse. But if Radford is in temporary limbo, so too are the players, who have 10 league matches left – starting today with Hitchin Town away – to avoid relegation.

In moving from a cramped, town centre location to a ground on the industrial outskirts, Stortford are following a well-worn path. But they have a fiendish stumbling block – the smart new ground on the edge of town will not be ready until next season. Thus every match now is away, as the club stages its home fixtures at a succession of venues – St Albans, Stansted, Saffron Walden, Ware... wherever.

"It's horrendous," admits the Stortford manager, Paul Taylor, who gets a result merely by ensuring all the players turn up at the right ground. "No one has gone missing yet," he said. "But the whole thing is much more difficult than I ever imagined. It's been a huge wrench to leave. It's a shame in a way, because the club have been there for many, many years."

Seventy-eight years, in fact. The booklet, entitled "Field of Dreams" and put together by Gareth Stephens, contains a picture of the first match played there on 3 October, 1919. It is just a playing field, ringed with the 400 supporters who witnessed a 2-1 win over Ware on that distant Saturday afternoon. The players are long-shorted blurs. In the foreground of the picture, behind the long row of flat-capped onlookers, someone has flung a bicycle down on the grass.

Over the years, that space was filled – houses were built along streets whose names acknowledged the man born two minutes' walk away, Cecil Rhodes: Zambesi Road, Shangani Road, and Rhodes Avenue, adopted as the popular name of Stortford's home ground despite official efforts to call it the George Wilson Stadium.

The club facilities also grew. First there was an old polo pavilion and a changing-room so small that the teams had to change in turn. In 1927 the club bought their own ground for £300 – a sum raised by supporters rallied by a local railway clerk, Sid Rose.

The 1930s saw a small wooden stand erected, and a Tannoy system which played gramophone records. Cigarettes and chocolates were sold by Rose from an usherettes' box. In 1962, the wooden stand was replaced by a brick one...

Progress, in bricks and mortar. This week I walked a familiar route to the ground where I had reported on the then soaring fortunes of Bishop's Stortford FC during the early 1980s. In that time, with the likes of Radford, Terry Sullivan and Lyndon "Bald Eagle" Lynch leading the line, they had won the FA Trophy at Wembley, and engaged in high profile FA Cup runs which saw them visited by a Middlesbrough team managed by Malcolm Allison in his fedora-wearing, cigar-chomping pomp.

"Crest Homes," the sign on the ground said. "Coming soon. A development of 2, 3 and 4-bedroomed houses."

Coming soon. How very exciting.

The field of dreams was now a field of mud, pipes, breeze blocks, bricks and yellow diggers. The foundations of a service road ran through the site of the stand. A man in a yellow jacket stood where the Town End goal had been, consulting a clipboard.

Since the last match, on 23 December, the builders had busied themselves to the extent that this piece of Hertfordshire had been restored, if only temporarily, to the space that existed here in 1919.

The booklet holds out the hope that the new ground will, in turn, become "home". What makes a home? In football terms, green green grass is a start. But there has been no sentimental transfer of the sacred Rhodes Avenue turf. "We left all the mud there," Taylor said with a chuckle.

The new pitch is being seeded, a less expensive alternative to re-turfing, but Taylor said: "I think it should have been turfed." For the sake of the players and supporters, let's hope it does not turn out to be a case of "as ye sow, so shall ye reap".

Radford, meanwhile, must bide his time. His garage won't be clear for months yet. The racing papers hadn't come in when he asked for them – but he sounded philosophical about that.

Atherton delays decision

Cricket

By Mark Baldwin
in Barbados

MIKE ATHERTON is trying to decide how best to start the next fortnight of this winter's West Indies campaign – spending time at the crease or relaxing on a beach.

The England captain had promised himself a break during the three-day fixture against Barbados, which starts today, but yesterday he admitted that he has yet to choose the best preparation for the back-to-back fifth and sixth Tests. England are 2-1 down in the series after their defeat in Guyana; the Barbados Test starts on Thursday and the final match in the series, in Antigua, begins on 20 March.

As an opening batsman Atherton has largely disappointed on this tour, although his second-innings 49 in the second Test victory in Trinidad was crucial in the context of that tough, low-scoring contest.

But scores of nought and one in Georgetown, where Curtly Ambrose twice saw him off with the new ball, put pressure back on Atherton to start producing with the bat. He faced only 19 deliveries in total in the Guyana Test and in the series to date has made only 96 runs in seven innings.

England's management will almost certainly be keen for Atherton to have the game off because, so far, he has played in every match on the Tour and is due a break in readiness for the final effort.

Atherton said: "I had always intended to have this game off, but at the moment I have not made a final decision. We will have to talk it through in selection. I feel fine physically, but the back-to-back Tests coming up will be very tiring for everyone – batsmen as well as bowlers."

One option for Atherton is to play but leave his vice-captain, Nasser Hussain, to lead the side on the field. Atherton will make his final decision this morning and if he does play then John Crawley will drop out.

Jack Russell's selection to keep wicket in this match, already guaranteed, is a clear indication that he will keep his Test place despite a scrappy performance in Georgetown.

"Jack was not the only player who had a bad game in the last Test. And, although he has not made many runs so far, we all know what a good batsman he can be," Atherton said.

The only city in this Barbados match is to give all the batsmen time in the middle if possible and, in the Test next week, we have to start getting totals like 350 or 400 on the board. That is going to be the key to success for us in the remainder of the series."

Fast bowlers Angus Fraser and Dean Headley will definitely sit out the Barbados fixture, because physically they face a demanding end to the series, but Andy Caddick will play after missing the Guyana Test.

There is also a decision to be made about whether Robert Croft or Phil Tufnell will be the sole spinner chosen for the next Test. The one picked for today's match is likely to be the one in line for Test selection, and Croft looks to have moved ahead of Tufnell after impressing on his Test comeback in Georgetown.



Mike Atherton tells a press conference yesterday he is as yet undecided about playing today Photograph: David Ashdown

S Africa wrecked by Waqar

South Africa 262-7 v Pakistan

Waqar Younis, the Pakistan fast bowler, yesterday claimed his 20th five-wicket haul in Test cricket as South Africa reached 262 for 7 after the first day of the third and final Test match in Port Elizabeth.

Waqar, who finished with five for 64, struck four times before lunch as South Africa slumped to 81 for 4 and then claimed the wicket of Hansie Cronje, the captain, shortly before the close. Cronje led a fightback, scoring 85 in 255 minutes and sharing partnerships of 45 with Andrew Hudson, 78 with Shaun Pollock and 57 with Mark Boucher.

First day; Pakistan won toss
SOUTH AFRICA – First Innings
A M Bacher lbw b Waqar 3
G Kirsten b Waqar 38
J H Kallis b Waqar 10
R D Ackerman b Waqar 11
A C Hudson c Khan b Mushtaq 42
*W J Cronje lbw b Waqar 85
S M Pollock c Azhar b Wasim 38
†N V Boucher not out 27
P S de Villiers not out 1
Extras (2lb 5nb) 7
Total (for 7, 90 overs) 262
Fall: 1-3 2-13 3-36 4-81 5-122 6-200 7-257.
To bat: P R Adams, A A Donald.
Bowling: Wasim Akram 21-5-54-1; Waqar Younis 19-4-64-5; Azhar Mahmood 21-7-47-0; Shoaib Akhtar 13-4-30-0; Mushtaq Ahmed 16-1-65-1.
PAKISTAN: Saeed Anwar, Aamir Sohail, Ijaz Ahmed, Inzamam-ul-Haq, Moin Khan, Azhar Mahmood, Wasim Akram, *Basher Latif, Mushtaq Ahmed, Waqar Younis, Shoaib Akhtar.
Umpires: S Dunne (NZ) and R Koertzen (SA).

● The South Africa players, Pat Symcox and Fanie de Villiers, together with Paddy Upton, the team's exercise specialist, face disciplinary action over alleged racist remarks during the second Test against Pakistan.

Australia catch out middle order

India 232-5 v Australia

AUSTRALIA yesterday restricted India to 232 for 5 on the opening day of the first Test in Madras after the openers Nayan Mongia and Navjot Sidhu got off to a solid start, adding 122 runs for the first wicket. However, a middle-order collapse saw Sachin Tendulkar, Mohammad Azharuddin and Saurav Ganguly add a meagre 33 runs between them.

Sidhu and Mongia frustrated the Australian attack for three hours and provided the platform for a big total before Mike Kasprowicz dispatched Mongia, caught at the wicket off a short, rising ball. Sidhu followed in the next over, run out by Mark Waugh at silly point. One over later Shane Warne had Tendulkar caught at slip off an airy drive for just four.

First day; India won toss
INDIA – First Innings
†N R Mongia c Healy b Kasprowicz 58
N S Sidhu run out 62
R S Dravid not out 42
S R Tendulkar c Taylor b Warne 4
*M Azharuddin c Reiffel b Warne 26
S C Ganguly lbw b Robertson 3
A Kumble not out 18
Extras (b6 lb5 nb4) 15
Total (for 5, 90 overs) 232
Fall: 1-122 2-126 3-130 4-188 5-195.
To bat: R K Chauhan, J Srinath, Harvinder Singh, Venkatapathy Raju.
Bowling (to date): Kasprowicz 21-8-44-1 (nb3); Reiffel 15-4-27-0; Warne 29-9-69-2 (nb1); Robertson 21-3-63-1; M.Waugh 1-0-4-0; S Waugh 4-1-11-0.
AUSTRALIA: *M A Taylor, M J Slater, G S Blewett, M E Waugh, S R Waugh, R T Ponting, †I A Healy, P R Reiffel, S K Warne, G Robertson, M S Kasprowicz.
Umpires: S Venkataraghavan (Ind) and G Sharp (Eng).

Sherborne profits from early start

Golf

By Andy Farrell
in Doha

A WELCOME break from the buffeting wind finally arrived for competitors in the Qatar Masters yesterday morning. The only problem was that you had to get up at 4.30am to enjoy the calm.

Andrew Sherborne could not remember having to rise earlier for a round of golf. The Bristol golfer might want to employ the tactic again. Teeing off at 6.40am, Sherborne returned a 64, eight under par, to take the half-way lead at 11 under by two from the Swiss Paolo Quirici.

"It was absolutely perfect out there," Sherborne said. Over two rounds he has yet to drop a shot and yesterday collected six birdies and an eagle at the 10th. "You have to make the most of days like these," he added. Especially when you have had years like Sherborne had in 1997, slumping to 104th on the money list. "So far this week I've been enjoying myself. Last year wasn't any joy at all. I was swinging badly and generally incompetent. When you are struggling it's the worst game in the world."

Ian Woosnam's moods fluctuate rather faster after lacking much enthusiasm in practice. The Welshman came in with a 65, as did Swindon's David Howell. "I drove the ball better and after two rounds I'm in prime position," said Woosnam, who at seven under was lying joint fifth, one shot behind the Swedes, Anders Forsbrand and Patrik Sjoland. Quirici and Sjoland both shot 66s, which were creditable for being compiled once the wind had got back up in the afternoon.

After 20 years on tour, Ross Drummond lost his card last year and is only playing in Doha thanks to a late sponsor's invitation. At five under par, he is within sight of the top-10 finish he needs to play in Morocco next week. The 41-year-old Scot enjoyed his best year in 1996, but found the confidence he gained disappear last season.

Sharks 'need to win trophy'

Basketball

By Richard Taylor

DESPITE the advent of Chicago Bulls' 6ft 10in cross-dressing Dennis Rodman, few would still see basketball players as potential bridesmaids' but Sheffield Sharks fit the bill.

Since their National Cup and Budweiser League double in 1995 they have been runners-up twice and semi-finalists four times in different competitions.

In the uni-ball Trophy Final at Birmingham's NEC tomorrow, Sheffield's first-year coach Chris Finch faces a London Towers team bidding for the title for a third successive season.

The Towers coach, Kevin Cadle, has won more games than any coach in the league but this season is seeing titles slip from his grasp.

"I know they want to win the trophy but we need to win it."

Sharks are still in contention for the Budweiser League title whose top pair, Greater London Leopards and Peugeot Birmingham Bullets, meet at the NEC tonight.

Leopards lost the initiative to Bullets by losing 88 -81 at home to Derby Storm on Tuesday, then needed an Eric Burks three-pointer nine seconds from time to beat Manchester Giants 97-94 on Thursday.

Leopards have 23 wins from 29 games, Bullets 21 from 26 and Sharks 20 from 26.

England fail to turn corner

Hockey

By Bill Colwill
in Ipoh, Malaysia

BARRY DANCER, England's Australian coach, watched anxiously as Germany played New Zealand in the last pool match of the Six Nations Sultan Azlan Shah Cup here yesterday following his side's drab 1-1 draw with Malaysia.

With the Kiwis twice coming from behind to beat Germany 3-2, England must now play Malaysia again tomorrow to avoid the wooden spoon. Australia will play Germany in the final, with Korea lining up against New Zealand for the bronze medal game.

After Simon Mason had kept England in the game early on with three fine saves, Russell Garcia slotted home England's first penalty corner in the 13th minute. That he and others failed from 10 further penalty corners was England's undoing. Garcia also saw the Malaysian goalkeeper Paul Lopez save his penalty stroke in the 26th minute.

ENGLAND: S Mason (Reading); B Garrard (Teddington), J Hallis (Old Loughtonians), B Waugh (Southgate, capt), J Wyatt (Reading); Kattar Talcher, J Pidcock (both Cannock), Manpreet Kochar (Reading), B Sharpe (Cannock), R Garcia (HDM, The Hague), J Lee (Old Loughtonians). Substitutes used: C Mayer (Cannock), A Humphrey (Cannock), M Pearn (Reading), N Thompson (Old Loughtonians).
MALAYSIA: P Lopez; Maninderjit Singh; Brian Jayhan Siva, Nor Azlan, Calvin Fernandez; S Kuhan, Aphthar Singh, Arul Selvaraj; Nor Saiful Zani (capt), Chalid Anwar, M Kalaiwanan. Substitutes used: Keeven Raj, Nishel Kumar, Liam Mun Fatt.
Umpires: D Gentles (Aus) and T O'Connor (NZ).

Myler attacks Super League as he resigns as chief executive

Rugby League

By Dave Hadfield

SUPER League has lost its chief executive with the resignation of Colin Myler after little more than a year in the job.

The former managing director and editor of both the *Daily* and *Sunday Mirror* was a high-profile appointment for the new organisation, but he departed with a sideswipe at others in the sport yesterday.

"For some time I have been disillusioned and professionally unfulfilled," he said. "Integrity and loyalty are two qualities which I believe are very important. Unfortunately, in recent times, these have been lacking in certain quarters."

Myler was supposed to spearhead the marketing of *Super League from his base in* London, but has looked increasingly squeezed by the appointment of Maurice Lindsay as managing director and Ian Robson as marketing executive.

The chairman of Super League, Chris Caisley, said: "I don't think he has been very happy of late, but his going should not be taken as a dilution of our attention on London."

Super League's sponsor, Dave Whelan, is on his way to taking overall control of Wigan, the club his cash has saved from financial collapse.

A shareholders' meeting today will vote on a change in the company rules that would allow him to take a controlling interest. If he gets the required 75 per cent approval – and the indications from the proxy votes already in are that he will – it will be a question of whether the numerous small shareholders agree to sell to him.

If not, he has said, he will walk away from the club, leaving it without backing and without a ground when they leave Central Park next year.

Meanwhile, the club is to discuss Gary Connolly's future with him at a meeting next week. Connolly is due to join an Australian club next year, but Wigan are keen to retain him and the Rugby Football Union has also made an approach.

Tyson sues King for $100m

Boxing

MIKE TYSON has sued his long-time promoter Don King for more than $100m (£60m) for allegedly cheating him.

Tyson, who has completely reorganised his professional life in the last month, filed his suit in the US District Court in Manhattan, alleging that the promoter has cheated him since 1986. Tyson is reportedly facing a $3m tax demand and is currently suspended for biting the ear of Evander Holyfield.

Pernell Whitaker has entered a drug and alcohol rehabilitation facility after reportedly failing a drug test last week. Whitaker submitted to the latest test as part of an agreement after failing one following his fight on 17 October against Andrei Pestriaev.

Keith Holmes, the World Boxing Council middleweight champion, has been charged with assault after allegedly attempting to hit a police officer after being pulled over in a routine traffic check in Maryland on Thursday night.

Sporting Digest

American football

Eric Allen, the *New Orleans Saints* cornerback, was traded by the club to the Oakland Raiders yesterday for a 1998 draft pick. Allen, who had said he would retire if he was not traded to a leading side, immediately questioned whether the *Raiders* were in that category.

Badminton

SWEDISH OPEN (Stockholm): Women's second round (selected): K Morgan (GB) bt second round (selected): K Morgan (GB) bt S Lindroth (Nor) 11-0 11-0. Men's third round: D Hall (GB) bt R Magnusson (Swe) 7-15 15-9 15-8; Gang Chen (Ch) bt C Robertson (GB) 15-4 15-3; K Jonassen (Den) bt C Haughton (GB) 15-3 15-11.

Basketball

NBA: Washington 103 New York 90; Dallas 119 LA Clippers 108; Miami 117 Houston 83; MILA Clippers 108; Miami 117 Houston 83; MILwaukee 104 Denver 87; Phoenix 102 Detroit 93.

Bowls

ENGLISH WOMEN'S INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIPS (Potters Leisure Centre, Great Yarmouth): Fours semi-finals: Blackpool Borough (J Cropper, M Mellinson, P Barker, D Hart) bt Egham, Surrey (A Ward, B Crisp, L Brownlee, M Steele) 26-7; Cherwell, Oxfordshire (P Mawhinney, A Allmond, K Hawes, S Lacey) bt Croydon, Surrey (D Price, J Adamson, P Davis, T Barton) 21-14.

Boxing

Pernell Whitaker, one of boxing's best pound-for-pound fighters for most of the decade, has entered a drug and alcohol rehabilitation facility after reportedly failing a drug test last week. "Sweet Pea" Whitaker submitted to the latest test as part of an agreement after reportedly failing one following his 17 October fight against Russian Andrei Pestriaev at Ledyard, Connecticut. He agreed to random screening and was issued this test as part of pre-fight preparation for his showdown with World Boxing Association welterweight champion Ike Quartey in Las Vegas on 25 April.

Cricket

Durham have signed Nicky Phillips, an off-spinner who was released by Sussex at the end of last season. Durham have also given a three-year contract to local batsman Michael Gough, a member of the England Under-19 squad which recently won the World Cup in South Africa.

SHEFFIELD SHIELD (Second day): (Adelaide): Queensland 268 (A Symonds 163); South Australia 276 for 7 (J Siddons 63). (Hobart): New South Wales 332 (C Richards 164, M Bevan 58); Tasmania 272 for 4 (J Cox 104 not out). (Perth): Western Australia 196 (A Gilchrist 109) and 231 for 3 (R Campbell 100); Victoria 157.

Football

Graeme Elder yesterday resigned as coach of Scottish Third Division club Queen's Park, but the 36-year-old will remain at the club as a player.

Neil Whitworth, who was taken ill with tuberculosis last season, has been released by Scottish premier division club Kilmarnock. The 25-year-old former Manchester United defender, who has been on a monthly contract, has spent three and a half years at Rugby Park. But he has been unable to hold down a first team place this season.

Sheffield Wednesday have released 28-year-old former Shrewsbury and Doncaster striker, O'Neill Donaldson. He has been on week-to-week terms and recently completed a month's loan at Oxford.

Dutch First Division club Roda JC Kerkrade sacked their coach Martin Jol yesterday – just 12 hours after suffering a 4-1 home defeat in the European Cup-Winners' Cup quarter-finals to Italian side Vicenza.

Golf

QATAR MASTERS (Doha, Qatar) (£68 or £4 unless stated): 135 A Sherborne 69 64, 135 P Curtis (Swe) 68 67, 138 A Forsbrand (Swe) 69 69, 139 J Sjoland (Swe) 70 69, 137 I Woosnam 72 65; J Townsend (US) 69 68, 138 D Howell 73 65; A Cotton 68 70; M Reale (Ita) 69 69; S Tinning (Den) 70 69; M Tunnicliff 69 69; P Walton 71 67, 139 R Wessels (SA) 69 70; R Drummond 69 70; P McGinley 70 69; M A Jimenez (Sp) 72 67; D Chopra (Swe) 71 68, 140 J M Olazabal (Sp) 71 69; P Broadhurst 73 67; J Sandelin (Swe) 72 68; S Struver (Ger) 72 68; H P Thyel (Ger) 70 70; D Clarke 73 67; MA Martin (Sp) 70 70; R Muntz (Neth) 72 68; I Garbutt 69 71; D Cooper 69 71; D Gilford 69 71. 141 M Jonzon (Swe) 71 67; A Cabrera (Arg) 71 70; C Whitelaw (SAf) 71 70; V Phillips 70 71. 142 B May (US) 73 69; S Kjeldsen (Den) 75 67; P-U Johansson (Swe) 72 70; P Eales 71 71; S Ballesteros (Sp) 72 70; R Goosen (SA) 70 72; J Haeggman (Swe) 71 71. 143 K Storgaard (Den) 72 71; M Pice 70 73; J Van de Velde (Fr) 75 70; C Rocca (It) 75 68; L Westwood 73 70; R Karlsson (Swe) 74 69; S Torrance 72 71; A Cejka (Ger) 72 71; P Price 71 72; G Orr 76 67; F Jacobson (Swe) 73 70; Kang Wook-soon (Kor) 72 71; P Lawrie 71 72; F Roca (Sp) 71 72; I Garrido (Sp) 72 71. 144 D Thomson 72 72; J Singh (Fid) 74 70; J Payne 74 70; S Cage 72 72; D Robertson 73 71; T Johnstone (Zim) 73 71; R Claydon 73 71; P Harrington 74 70; M Mouland 75 69; S Webster 74 70; M Davis 75 69; D Carter 69 75; K Eriksson (Swe) 72 72; M Hallberg (Swe) 69 75; E Romero (Arg) 72 72; P Mitchell 72 72; D Smyth 75 69; R Chapman 72 72.

DORAL-RYDER OPEN (Miami): Leading first-round scores (US unless stated): 68 M Brisky, R Black, M Calcavecchia, B Tway, C Strange. 69 T Bliss, L Porter, H Sutton, J Carter, D Martin. 70 K Perry, D Duval, S Ozaki, S Appleby (Aus), A Baker, J Nicklaus, B Glider, N Lancaster, T Herron, T Woods, J Morse, J Huston, B Langer (Ger). Selected: 71 V Singh (Fij), S Lyle (GB), N Price (Zim). 72 N Faldo (GB). 73 S Elkington (Aus), D Love. 74 G Norman (Aus). 75 J Palmeva (Swe), C Montgomerie (GB).

Hockey

SULTAN AZLAN SHAH INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENT (Ipoh, Malaysia): Australia 6 South Korea 2; England 1 (Garcia 73) Malaysia 1; New Zealand 3 Germany 2.

Final table

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Australia	5	4	0	1	20	10	12
Germany	5	3	1	1	16	10	10
Korea	5	2	1	2	17	14	7
New Zealand	5	2	0	3	11	15	6
England	5	1	1	3	9	12	4
Malaysia	5	1	1	3	7	16	4

Ice hockey

NHL: Pittsburgh 2 Chicago 2 (ot); New Jersey 1 Boston 1 (ot); Ottawa 4 Colorado 2; Philadelphia 3 Washington 2; St Louis 4 Montreal 0; Carolina 2 Los Angeles 1; San Jose 5 Detroit 4; Calgary 6 Vancouver 2.

Paralympics

WINTER GAMES (Nagano, Japan): Men: downhill: Blind 1/3 class: 1 J C Mallea (Sp) 1:07.83; 2 G Del Maistro (It) 1:18.34; 3 B Oberhammer (It) 1:22.44. Blind 2 class: 1 G Pschelder (Aut) 1:20.35; 2 K Primus (Aut) 1:21.48; 3 S Kopcik (Slovak) 1:22.42. Standing classes LW5/8: 1 T Calmer (Ger) 29:43.2 (i); 2 E Lacoix (Fr) 32:18.3 (i); 3 A Nurevet (Nor) 29:05.6 (i). Slalom: Standing classes LW2/3, 4,6/7, 9: 1 A Fevre (Fr) 2:02.84 (i); 2 A Hacker (Ger) 30.32.7 (i); 3 K Reissamuis (Fin) 27.43.6 (i).

WOMEN: downhill: Blind: 1 M Arno (Spa) 1:29.61; 2 K Tapia (Cz Rep) 1:29.25; 3 P Casanova (Fr) 1:29.35. Slalom: 1 K Odinaka (Japan) 1:34.37; 2 S Wall (US) 1:38.09; 3 C Paulson (Swe) 1:39.45. LW2 (double-below in one lower limb): 1 B Billmeier (US) 1:23.77; 2 N Lechner (Aut) 1:29.95; 3 M Behle (US) 1:27.41. LW3 (disabled in both lower limbs)/LW4 (one lower limb)/LW6/8 (one upper limb): 1 J Kelchner (US) 1:16.57; 2 M Riddell (US) 1:18.64; 3 N Christ (Aut) 1:19.04. Sitted LW9/10/11 (both lower limbs): 1 R Myklebust (Nor) 32.08d (i); 2 T Mulyenych (Ukr) 44.36.3 (i); 3 D Akoppen (Ukr) 45.31.9 (i). Blind 1 and 3 classes: 1 M Kobayashi (Japan) 34:16.2 (i), 2 G Berghofer (Aut) 37:16.8 (i); 3 S Wohlmacher (Ger) 39:30.6 (i). Blind 1: 1 V Bansa (Ger) 36:20.1 (i); 2 I Salvarova (Rus) 44:27 (i); 3 A M Bredahl (Den) 44:32.7 (i). Standing classes LW2-8: 1 T Huser (Swit) 37:44.1 (i); 2 A Flores (Fr) 38:43.1 (i); 3 M van de Bunt (Neth) 39:16.5 (i).

Rugby League

The chairman of Blackpool Gladiators, Allan Sherratt, is in hospital recovering from a heart attack. Sherratt has fought for the club to be reinstated in the Rugby League, from which it was demoted in 1993.

Swinton have signed the former Warrington, Widnes and Great Britain forward, Paul Hulme, who was released this winter.

Rugby Union

The Welsh Rugby Union yesterday appointed former Neath and Cardiff full-back Dennis Gethin as its sixth secretary in nine years.

SUPER 12 SERIES (Canberra): ACT Brumbies 34 Otago Highlanders 26.

Sailing

After 33 days and 11 hours at sea, EF Education, the all female team in the Whitbread Round the World Race, retired from the fifth leg yesterday after being dogged by bad luck, having lost most of their rig on 7 February. Nine days later, the jury rig also failed, and after several days of being becalmed, the crew decided unanimously to retire.

ISAF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS (Dubai): Second day (winners and GB): Multihull Woman (23 entries) results after four races without discard: 1 (SA) I Schabert and G Arley 17pts. GB: 15 D Howell and S Garcia 53pts, 22 K Seth and R Tugwell 80pts. Multihull Open (57 entries) results after 4 race without discard: 1 (US) E Proust and B Adam 16pts. GB: 16 M and V Farrow 37pts; 134 M Eales and M Hardy 45pts. Keelboat Open (76 entries) results after three races without discard: 1 (Fin) F Bebon, H Cunningham, C Dermer, R Moner 4pts. GB: 8 I Williams, M Nicholls, C Gowers 13pts; 33 G Charles, M Covell, Paul Brotherton 24pts. Keelboat Women (28 entries) results after three races without discard: 1 (GB) S Robertson, S Carr, S Cuthbert, J Grindley 17pts. GB: 18 C Egin, T Cooper, D Edge, S Pinnell 51pts. Singlehanded Women (24 entries) after four races without discard: 1 K Roug (Den) 14pts. GB: 15 N Muller 68pts; 25 R Hartley 91pts; 36 H Wake 135pts. Singlehanded Open (146 entries) after 4 races without discard: 1 R Suomeisinen (Fin) 16pts, GB: 7 B Ainslie 35pts; 58 D Mellor 111pts. Double Handed Women (53 entries) after three races without discard: 1 M Seaward P Rahnoo 10pts, GB: 8 B Reagan and S Webb 35pts; 27 H Lucas and M Beach 81pts; 36 S Rees Jones and I Lesk 94pts. Doublehanded Open (92 entries) results after 3 races without discard. 1 I Paschalidis and A Pachumas (Gre) 9pts; GB: 8 N Rogers and J Glanfield 21pts; 62 M Fenwick and S Bull 75pts.

Tennis

FRANKLIN TEMPLETON CLASSIC (Arizona) Second round: T Haas (Ger) bt M Philippoussis (Aus) 5-7 6-2 6-0; J Stoltenberg (Aus) bt C Costa (Sp) 6-3 2-6 6-4; S Lareau (Can) bt D Hrbaty (Cz Rep) 7-6 7-5; A Gaudenzi (It) bt J Tarango (US) 6-4 3-6 6-3; T Haas (Ger) bt M Philippoussis (Aus) 5-7 6-2 6-0.

TODAY'S NUMBER

3.9m

The number of viewers who watched Chelsea's 2-1 victory over Real Betis in the European Cup-Winners' Cup quarter-finals on Thursday. It was Channel 5's second biggest audience to date – the largest was the five million who tuned into England's 2-0 victory in Poland in the World Cup qualifiers last May.

Ball boys' dermarcation dispute sparks Golden Delicious riot



CHRIS MAUME

SPORT ON TV

THERE is probably not a Briton who has ever watched Formula One on the box who isn't familiar with a certain high-pitched whine drowning out the cars. *The Murray Walker Story* (ITV) looked at the man behind the noise in a documentary that centred on the dramatic final grand prix of last season, at Jerez in Spain.

It was fascinating and hilarious to see him on the job. He never sits down, preferring to pad nervily from foot to foot, as if his medication wasn't quite right. And as he gets excited, he executes little dances with wildly exaggerated gestures, like a particularly flamboyant mime artist.

"And Jacques Villeneuve is inside Frentzen's time," he says during qualifying, with his palm held flat out in front of him. "One hundred and 85 miles an hour" – fist furiously clenched, elbow crooked – "back off into second gear, 55 miles an hour" – palm flat out again in front – "accelerate round the left-hander and keeps on going" – a broad, sweeping movement with his left hand - "AND HE MOVES UP INTO PROVISIONAL POLE POSITION!" – his arm straight up, raised to heaven as if the triumph was his. Meanwhile, Martin Brundle puts a hand on his shoulder as if to keep him on the ground.

What is most remarkable about his high-octane style is that he always has another gear to move up into (sorry about all these motoring puns, but it just demonstrates how much the car has enriched the language). When Jonathan Pearce, whose football commentaries for Capital Gold have led to several cases of exploding radios, tried his hand on the television, his fatal flaw was exposed. On radio, he could pitch it as intense as he wanted because the listener had only his words to go on. On TV, when things became genuinely exciting, his grating roar had nowhere to go. With Walker, just when you think he's reached the top of his range, he racks it up another notch.

It also helps to be, well, a motormouth. Brundle described how, in Melbourne on the Wednesday before one race, the production team needed a soundcheck. "Murray started commentating on an imaginary race that nearly had me looking out of the window," said Brundle.

Brian Moore would not be advised to try this. He has enough trouble with the real thing. But there's always Ron Atkinson to make up in entertainment value what Moore lacks in accuracy. On Wednesday, as Manchester United were carving a goalless draw out of the Monagesque rockface (ITV), Big Ron was talking about the way Monaco had tailored their game to the atrocious surface, employing a combination of the offside trap and the pressing game. "It's given me an idea," he said. "We play United on Saturday – I'll see if I can get a car park built underneath the pitch."

In the absence of any decent football to watch (though for a fan, even dull games cause too much anxiety to be truly boring), the ball boys provided some diversion. They seemed to be playing their own game, seeing if they could get the new ball to the player before the old one had gone out of play (the players' surprise as new balls flew at them from odd angles kept reminding me of Cato's domestic ambushes for Clouseau in the Pink Panther films).

A couple of times the player seemed irritated at being deprived of his little breather, holding on to the ball for a couple of seconds as a tiny show of defiance – "I'll do this in my own time, thank you very much." Once, towards the end, the boys succeeded in getting two on the pitch at once when one player had the temerity to retrieve his own ball. A demarcation dispute followed, and the boys began to picket the goalmouths, hanging burning balls from the crossbars and pelting British lorries with Golden Delicious apples (you may have missed that bit).

My colleague, Ken Jones, wondered if Jean Tigana hadn't been coaching the boys, such was their efficiency. He recalled seeing Leeds play in Europe in the old days and observing the home side's ball boys, who were all youth team players. They maintained a speedy service until a few minutes from time when, with their side ahead, they went on a go-slow. Some time later, Ken mentioned this to Don Revie, who was never one to miss a trick. "Good idea," he said. "We'll start doing that."

I realise that since Highbury's French revolution it is *vieux chapeau* to protest that Arsenal and attractive football enjoy little more than nodding acquaintance. I was still tickled, though, to hear the words of Emanuel Marada, the editor of African Soccer magazine, on Channel 4's *Planet Football*, which looked back over the African Nations Cup and ahead to the World Cup. "When I'm not touring the continent studying the beautiful game," he said, "I have a weakness for Arsenal Football Club." You can have too much of a good thing, you see.

SIDELINES

Hendrie follows in Robledo's footsteps

THE EX-FILES

JOHN HENDRIE is small but perfectly in form, just like George Robledo when he hit the Wembley trail. The feats of Hendrie, whose goals against Manchester United earned Barnsley an FA Cup quarter-final tie tomorrow at one of his former clubs, Newcastle United, echo those of the diminutive inside-forward who left Oakwell for St James' Park almost 50 years ago.

Robledo arrived in England as a refugee following a revolution in Chile. After the war he made his name with Barnsley, tempting Newcastle to pay £26,500 for him and his brother, Ted. Some 164 games and 91 goals later, he went back to South America armed with winner's medals earned in 1951 and '52.

Hendrie, a 34-year-old refugee from Scotland, had an unfulfilling term on Tyneside a decade ago. Another current Tyke with a Toon connection is Matty Appleby, who came to prominence under Ossie Ardiles but was offloaded to Darlington by Kevin Keegan before re-establishing himself in Danny Wilson's side at Barnsley.

John Beresford's transfer from Newcastle to Southampton, following his Cup swan-song against Stevenage, deprives him of a reunion with the club who gave him his debut. Others who may feel a split affinity tomorrow include Stuart Barrowclough, Pat Howard, Martin Gorry and Mark Robinson, who all took what was then an upwardly mobile route from South Yorkshire to the North-east.

Ten things that Sheff Utd's Greek Vassilis Borbokis might be missing today



1 The dilapidated charm of modern Athens, where rich history mixes with modern-day tawdriness. Like Sheffield, then.
2 A half-time *spanikopita* (cheese and spinach pie) and chips.
3 The legacy of Socrates, the exiled genius. Sheffield may have been sent to Coventry today, but their chances of revolutionising philosophy when they come back are approximately nil.
4 The spectacular mountain terrain of Greece. Sheffield's seven hills are blips in comparison.
5 The wet, mild winters and dry, hot summers of the Aegean.
6 Thinking of Kos as an island, not a salad item.
7 Sea-turtles colonies.
8 *Rembetika* music, with its themes of poverty and suffering. Appropriate for half-time entertainment at Bramall Lane?
9 The Acropolis, Parthenon and Erectheion. Sheffield can muster but a Crucible.
10 Theodoros Angelopoulos films, including *The Beekeeper* and *The Travelling Players*.

EU rules ticket sales 'lost cause'

THE European Union has refused to seek a redistribution of World Cup tickets already allocated, making sure instead that the limited amount of seats still available will be distributed more equably.

Even though the EU's executive commission maintained that the largest share of tickets had already been sold through a system unfairly favouring the French, an EU spokesman said it would not expend energy on a lost cause.

Instead, the commission said it has been "discussing solutions to assure that all tickets still available to the public will be distributed on equal conditions to all supporters".

Mark Goldberg has been given more time to complete his £30m takeover of Crystal Palace. The club director and prospective chairman is now expected to have a controlling interest by 22 December and not October, as originally planned. His next payment has been deferred until 29 May. Ron Noades will continue as chairman.

Terry Venables is poised to turn down Goldberg's offer to become Palace's new manager and he has told friends that he is reluctant to go to the struggling club. The Australian coach has been offered a lucrative five-year deal, but is believed to prefer to wait for an approach from a top Premier League club.

Palace's £1m bid for Aston Villa's Sasa Curcic has been blocked after the Serbian midfielder was denied a work permit. The Department of Education and Employment ruled that he had not played enough games for his country or for Villa to qualify for a renewal of the permit.

The Football Association has been asked by Fifa, the game's world governing body, to begin experiments with video technology to help decide whether a ball has crossed the goal-line. The International Football Association Board, the Fifa body that sets the rules of the game, has asked the FA to work with universities to help referees avoid goalscoring controversies. However, Fifa, has emphasised the move is only a trial.

The IFAB have also agreed to an FA experiment in Jersey where referees will be allowed to move the ball 10 yards closer to the goal if the defending side attempt to slow the taking of a free-kick.

The board will also bring in a new law from 1 July which could see players sent off in this summer's World Cup for any tackle from behind. Under current rules, players can be dismissed if they make contact with the opponent, but the new rule could see them sent off even if they take the ball first.

The Football League have decided to copy their Italian counterparts and tell supporters how many minutes of injury time will be played. The reserve official will be told by the referee how long will be added on and he will hold up a substitutes' board to inform fans. The trial runs from next weekend until the end of the season. It may also be used at the Coca-Cola Cup final between Chelsea and Middlesbrough on 29 March.

Tottenham are set to give a trial to a Chinese international, Fan Zhiyi, who plays for Shanghai Shenhua, spent a week with Southampton earlier this year and will return to England on Monday for a three-week stint with Spurs.

Jean-Jacques Eydelie has signed for Walsall from the Swiss side Sion. The French midfielder, who was fined and given a year's suspended ban three years ago after admitting bribing Valenciennes players to throw a match against Marseilles to help them win the championship, will be on a monthly contract.



Spanish spotlight: Louis van Gaal, the coach of Barcelona, feels the pressure of the press Photograph: PA

Only victory will satisfy Heynckes

There will be more than just football at stake when Barcelona meet Real Madrid tonight. Nick Duxbury reports

WHENEVER Barcelona and Real Madrid lock horns, the Spanish media gorges itself on another "game of the century" and today's feast at the Nou Camp is no exception.

Given the background of the clubs – Barca representing the Catalans and Real the Castilian seat of a once repressive government – the passions aroused are more akin to England v Scotland in their intensity. Much of Spain grinds to a halt and even weddings are rescheduled to avoid the competition.

Into the Nou Camp – with its 112,000 all-seated capacity – tonight comes the Real coach, Jupp Heynckes, who will know that it is 14 years since the club last won a league match there. Yet the Dutchman must triumph or else Barca – with a game in hand – will take a potentially-decisive five-point lead at the top of the table.

While Heynckes is chewing his nails on the bench, the hottest reception in a cacophony of noise will be for Christian Karembeu, the French midfielder who turned down Barca in favour of their eternal rivals after a bitter 18-month tug of war.

The 27-year-old Karembeu struggled initially, but struck form in Real's 1-1 draw at Bayer Leverkusen in the European Cup quarter-finals on Wednesday. The result, which leaves the six-times European champions with a foot in the semi-finals for the first time since 1989, also proved that Savio Bortolini, the Brazilian who joined Real in December, is finding his feet.

With Savio on the left of midfield and Karembeu down the right, Heynckes may finally have hit on the winning formula which could save his job. Meanwhile, his Barca counterpart, Louis van Gaal, found his own best team almost by accident.

A combination of injuries and international duty forced a change in tactics and the effect was instantaneous. Since then Barca have started to look like a team rather than just the sum total of exceptional individuals like Rivaldo and Luis Figo.

"This game comes at a good time for the team," Van Gaal said. "The are in good shape and what is more important they believe it and feel it. The players have great confidence."

However, if Van Gaal may be quietly thankful for the batch of injuries that contributed to reshaping the Barca line-up, he may now be thinking that there can be too much of a good thing. He will have only one natural, central defender, the out of form Dutchman Winston Bogarde, available for today's game. Fernando Couto is suspended and Albert Ferrer and Miguel Angel Nadal, who have fallen from grace, may be recalled.

If they play, then Nadal and Ferrer will have their hands full denying Spanish international colleagues Fernando Hierro and Raul Gonzalez, plus the Brazilian Roberto Carlos.

The player with the most incentive to shine is the Barca utility player Luis Enrique. He will be determined to show Real just how much his game has improved since moving from Madrid two seasons ago. The former defender is now one of the Spanish league's top scorers and a first-choice selection at international level.

"I can't deny that I would love to score," said Enrique, who got to know what it is to be on the receiving end of barracking during five not so happy years at Real. If he does find the net, the noise will be heard in Madrid.

NAME OF THE GAME
No 25: THE BUDDIES

Although most St Mirren supporters refer to their team as "the Saints", reference books usually give the club's nickname as "the Buddies". The name is used generally to describe anyone from Paisley and is thought to be a term of affection, to reflect the locals' reputation as friendly and generous folk.

THIS WEEK

On 8 March 1975, Arsenal played hosts to West Ham in the quarter-final of the FA Cup, as they will again tomorrow, 23 years to the day.

The Arsenal side that day, including Pat Rice, Liam Brady and Brian Kidd, found their task too hard. West Ham, with Trevor Brooking, Billy Bonds, Frank Lampard and the two-goal hero Alan Taylor, won 2-0.

Taylor had been bought by West Ham only the previous November, from Rochdale, for £40,000, and had been very much an unknown quantity prior to the that game. In a season where others also triumphed when not expected to, the Hammers went on to win the cup.

There was some consolation for one Arsenal player the day after losing to West Ham. The great helmsman of English football, Alan Ball, was named as the country's captain for the following week's friendly with West Germany. England won 2-0, away.

HISTORY LESSON

Leeds go into their FA Cup quarter-final against Wolverhampton Wanderers this afternoon knowing that history is firmly on their side. The two sides have met five times in the competition and Leeds have won on each occasion.

The teams were drawn together in the Cup four times in a 10-year period between 1973 and 1982. In the 1973 semi-finals a Billy Bremner goal at Maine Road was the difference between the two sides (Leeds went on to lose to Sunderland in the final).

They met again in the following season's third round, when Bremner and John Richards were the scorers in a 1-1 draw at Molineux. Mick Jones gave Leeds a 1-0 victory in the replay.

In the two sides' first Cup meeting, in the 1935-36 season, Leeds needed a replay to beat Wolves in the third round. After a 1-1 draw at Molineux Leeds won the replay 3-1.

Zola leaps to his own defence

By Bill Pierce

GIANFRANCO ZOLA was still seething yesterday after being branded a diver – and knowing he dare not put a foot out of place now for fear of being banned from the semi-final of the European Cup-Winners' Cup.

Zola collected one of Chelsea's four yellow cards in an otherwise splendid 2-1 triumph over the Spaniards of Real Betis in Seville on Thursday night.

The result means Gianluca Vialli's team are on the doorstep of their sixth major semi-final in five years and can even go through with a 1-0 defeat in the second leg against Betis at Stamford Bridge in two weeks.

But Zola's yellow card after a penalty-box challenge by Betis' Yugoslav defender Hristo Vidakovic sent him sprawling just before half-time last night means the £4.5m striker will be automatically suspended for one match in Europe if he is booked again in the second leg.

Zola was upset about the decision by the Bulgarian referee, Atanas Ouzounov, a late replacement for Sweden's Leif Sundell who was taken off the match by Uefa last week after being spotted fraternising with Betis officials at a recent Spanish League match.

Zola said: "I do not dive. I have never played the game that way. The referee gave his opinion but how far away was he from the position? I was fouled and it should have been a penalty. Now, instead, I have a yellow card when I was the one who did nothing wrong."

But Zola will have to live with the booking as Chelsea's assistant manager, Gwyn Williams, explained: "There is no appeal mechanism against cautions in Europe. We can't do a thing about it. But it's all right because I'd bet Franco won't be booked again for another six months. We all know what type of player he is."

Forest ready to bounce back

By Catherine Riley

Nottingham Forest have been told to concentrate on their Premiership aspirations, rather than dwelling on their 3-0 defeat by Sunderland in midweek.

Dave Bassett, the Forest manager, said yesterday: "The Sunderland game was a big disappointment, but we're still top of the table and remain on course for promotion. It's important we bounce back against Crewe."

Meanwhile, his opposite number at Crewe, Dario Gradi, has warned his team that no one can be sure of their position. "At the moment the goals are not coming and I may have to tinker with the side," Gradi said, hinting that striker Steve Anthrobus could be dropped for the match at Gresty Road.

Peter Reid also refuses to rest on his laurels after Sunderland's win at Forest. Stockport will provide tough opposition at the Stadium of Light and the Sunderland manager said: "I watched Stockport score five goals against Reading in midweek and they looked a very good side and the three players who scored the goals – Brett Angell, Chris Byrne and Steve Grant – are all former Sunderland players."

A goalless draw looks highly unlikely at Portman Road where free-scoring Ipswich entertain fellow promotion hopefuls Charlton – the League's top scorers. Town are unbeaten in the League since Boxing Day.

Manchester City, fresh from a 3-1 win at Huddersfield on Tuesday, have been told by their manager, Joe Royle, not to expect fellow strugglers Oxford United to roll over at Maine Road. "Oxford are fighting for their survival," Royle said. "We have to win at home but it would be dangerous for people to expect us to win. We have to work for it."

Reading entertain bottom-placed Port Vale in the first of three vital home games against relegation-threatened sides.

Brown's pledge to McAllister

By Phil Gordon

THE Scotland coach, Craig Brown, has said that injured Gary McAllister will travel to the World Cup finals this summer as a non-playing captain.

Brown has asked the Coventry midfielder, whose cruciate ligament injury on Wednesday night ruled him out of the tournament, to join the Scots' 22-man squad at France '98.

Brown has also paved the way for his skipper's eventual return to international football by saying he wants the 33-year-old McAllister to lead the Scots to the European Championship finals in 2000.

"It is tragic that someone as good as Gary should never play in a World Cup finals," said Brown, "but he should not believe his international career is over. He could play a crucial role in the European Championship qualifying matches."

McAllister admitted he was still upset by the news that he would not be playing in the World Cup. "I have worked all my life for the chance to play in a game like the opening World Cup match against Brazil. It is a game anyone in the world would have wanted and now it has been snatched away from me."

Should Brown opt to replace McAllister with Craig Burley he will have found the international-class midfielder he needs, according to the Celtic coach, Wim Jansen. "I think he is international standard, he showed that when he did well against Liverpool in the Uefa Cup.

"I don't want to speak about the national coach's decision, but we know he has the quality to play central midfield at the highest level."

Burley's fitness is in doubt for tomorrow's Tennents Scottish Cup quarter-final meeting with Dundee United at Tannadice. Along with Jackie McNamara (knee), Burley has been rested from training this week to allow a calf problem valuable recovery time – but both are expected to play.

THIS WEEK'S TRANSFERS

Transfers	Loans / trials
Free transfers or undisclosed fees unless stated	**Neil Thompson** (defender) Barnsley to York City
Bryan Small (defender) Bolton to Bury	**Michael O'Neill** (forward) Coventry City to Reading
Graeme Atkinson (midfielder) Preston North End to Brighton	**Chris Greenacre** (forward) Man City to Blackpool
Alex Dyer (forward) Huddersfield Town to Notts County	**Darisz Kubicki** (defender) Wolves to Tranmere
	Mark Stein (forward) Chelsea to Bournemouth

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Monaco and bust as wheel of fortune turns its back on No 10



THE GAFFER TAPES

I BLAME Jock McKilt, he was the one who said to me, the night of my debut: "I'm givin' yee the No 10 shirt because you're a classic No 10. Wear it with pride."

And I did, through a dozen clubs, four relegations, a promotion and an FA XI cap. No one ever took that shirt off me, not even Pele when we played together for the New York Cosmos – though it did look odd, two of us wearing No 10. I still have that shirt on the wall of the outside loo, the No 10, the number of Pele, Maradona, Zico, Currie, Bowles, Brooking and Gaffer.

Never again. I was flying on Wednesday night, baccarat, blackjack, craps, the lot. Winning all the way. I had more chips than Harry Ramsden and more girls on my arm than Jim Davidson. Then I arrived at the roulette table and said to myself, "you've had 10 on your shirt all your life, now put your shirt on 10."

They all piled on, my winning run had got noticed and half of Monaco were betting with me, two national managers and a couple of Manchester United players (no names, no pack drill), a Newcastle player who'd discharged himself from a Dublin hospital and caught the first plane over, half a dozen crowned kings of minor states and a gaggle of former Tory politicians still trying to win back their deposits. As the wheel spun I thought "this is it, Barry Algernon Gaffer, you are going down as the man who broke the bank in Monte Carlo".

Then the wheel stopped, the ball bounced around just like another ball had on the Stade Louis II, I sipped my dry martini (shaken not stirred) and froze as it landed on eight. Why, oh why, had old McKilt not given me the No 8 shirt, virtually the same position, even those days. I wouldn't be skint and Pele might still be talking to me.

The place was as silent as Selhurst Park when Wimbledon are at home. The girls drifted away like George Graham spotting the tax man, suddenly I had more space around me than Victor Ikpeba had managed all night – and even fewer fans. "*Il est malheureux*," said the croupier insincerely. He wiped the sweat of his brow, raked the chips in with a shovel and added: "*Vous êtes mal comme un perroquet, n'est pas?*"

I gave him a bit of choice Anglo-Saxon back and suddenly two large and unsmiling gentlemen were alongside in penguin suits, removing the free bevvies the management had plied me with, and helping me to the door. Luckily a couple of press lads who had passed out in the gutter outside broke my landing.

Fortunately, I had taken the precaution of leaving a few francs in my room – it's a habit I developed after a salutary experience in Marrakesh one year – and that meant I was able to get back to the Old Cornfield.

That was important as we've finally landed our new assistant. On the advice of one of my former chairmen I picked up an old Rothmans, found the list of then-Sludgethorpe players, stuck in a pin and, at the third attempt, found someone who is now working as a coach. Gregory Johnson will thus join the club as soon as we've agreed a deal with Third Division strugglers Elliston Villa.

Meanwhile, the chairman has gone missing. He went on that countryside march last week wearing his foxskin jacket and was last seen running across Hyde Park pursued by a pack of dogs and half-a-dozen overweight red-jacketed jockeys. We're very concerned as he had his club keys with him and, though we've forced the boardroom door, we're having trouble getting into the drinks cabinet and safe. We've asked Cliff Phace to reprise his old burglary skills, but if that doesn't work we'll have use Plan B, Ruben Tuesdai's stick of dynamite.

Shaun Prone and Ivor Niggle are both out of today's game, it's purely a selection decision based on form, nothing to do with their having squad numbers eight and 10.

Barry Gaffer **was talking to** *Glenn Moore*

Freedman comes out of the shadows

The Wolves striker has had his setbacks. But, he tells **Phil Shaw**, he feels good about today's FA Cup quarter-final at Leeds

AND THE one-cap wonders think they are hard done by. There was Dougie Freedman, poised for his international debut and in the World Cup to boot, when the other team failed to turn up. As if that were not irksome enough, he has never had the call from his country again.

A less positive person might have wondered whether someone up there had it in for him. Not only did Freedman's Scotland career take a nasty kick in the Baltics when Estonia left them all dressed up with no one to play, but he has twice been offloaded from the Premiership after a grand total of two starting appearances.

Even now, despite being leading scorer for Wolverhampton Wanderers with a highly respectable 12 goals in 27 matches, Freedman has found the Molineux crowd slow to warm to his talents. His crime, like many a Wolves striker over the past decade, is that he is not Steve Bull.

During our conversation, I was holding forth about what it is, apart from a trifling 300 goals, that makes "Bully" such a working-class hero: "He chases everything, balls other players regard as a waste of energy," I said. With a mixture of self-mockery and honesty, Freedman cut in: "And I don't."

The 24-year-old Glaswegian, blessed with some of the ebullience of his adolescent idol, Ally McCoist, loses no sleep over invidious comparisons or claims that he does not charge about enough. "I came here to play the way I can play. People either like it or they don't. If I keep scoring, the style won't matter to them."

Were he to settle today's quarter-final tie at Leeds United, Freedman could get away with playing the next fixture sat in an armchair and puffing on a cigar.

It would certainly confirm his talismanic status in Wolves' FA Cup adventure. Having scored at Darlington in the third round, he wrecked Wimbledon with a stunning late solo effort at the last stage.

Yet his importance to Mark McGhee's side in their quest to gain promotion from the First Division and/or reach the Cup final is replete with irony. His two goals in the play-offs last May helped take Crystal Palace to Wembley at the expense of none other than Wolves.

Palace's eventual victory over Sheffield United restored Freedman to the level he had left when Queen's Park Rangers – where he understudied the likes of Les Ferdinand and Roy Wegerle – freed him to Barnet.

A prolific strike-rate for the club with the bizarrely sloping pitch earned Freedman an invitation from the Palace. His initial success there prompted the Scotland manager, Craig Brown, to take him to the double-header with Latvia and Estonia 18 months ago.

"We got to Tallinn for the second game and Craig told me I was substitute and there was a fair chance I'd come on. But when kick-off was switched from the night to two in the afternoon, the Estonians decided not to show. At five to two I was still hoping to see their bus coming through the gates."

Freedman's Law meant there was an inevitability about his absence from the rematch in Monte Carlo. Promotion to the Premiership with Palace eased the disappointment, but after only spasmodic outings this season – including a bit part in a win at Elland Road – he was transferred to Wolves.

"I was getting stale at Selhurst. Things weren't happening for me. I liked the club at first, but things started changing. They were bringing a few foreign stars in." Freedman argued, with no obvious sour grapes, that Palace's imports had struggled with the "hard slog, games every three or four days" of an English season, adding: "It's not their fault – they're not used to it."

Away from the Cup, Wolves' own form has been patchy. Their best hope now looks to be the play-offs, which is also familiar territory for the player leading Leeds today. Freedman's compatriot and former room-mate, David Hopkin, was another scorer for Palace against Wolves last spring and also decided the final, though he has not made the expected impact in Yorkshire.

"George Graham has got him doing more of a holding role, whereas at Palace he had the freedom to do what he wanted – bomb on, set up goals, score them. I know what he can do, so I'll be happy if he just sits in the midfield and breaks things up."

The pair remain close friends. "I spoke to Hoppy the other day and we agreed that there'll be no room for mates once the whistle goes. Leeds will be confident, being at home, but I sense a determination in our dressing-room that this won't be the end of our Cup run. In this competition, home or away doesn't really matter.

"Our best chance is to keep it really tight, give nothing away, make it boring – no entertainment at all – and try to nick a goal. We've got a very strong defence."

Tongue may well have been tickling cheek as he spoke, for his instincts as a player are purely attacking. Besides, there is an outside chance of a place in the World Cup finals this summer. Failing that, the European Championship qualifying draw has provided Freedman with the ultimate incentive – a return to Tallinn.



Dougie Freedman (left) beats the Wimbledon defence to score the winner in the last round — Photograph: Allsport

Major weekend football fixtures and pools check

TODAY

3.0 unless stated

FA Cup sixth round
1 Coventry v Sheffield Utd
2 Leeds v Wolves

FA Carling Premiership
3 Liverpool v Bolton
4 Southampton v Everton
– Sheffield Wed v Manchester Utd

Nationwide League First Division
5 Birmingham v QPR
6 Bury v Norwich
7 Crewe v Nottingham Forest
8 Ipswich v Charlton
9 Manchester City v Oxford Utd
10 Reading v Port Vale
11 Stoke v Huddersfield
12 Sunderland v Stockport
13 Swindon v Portsmouth
14 West Bromwich v Bradford City

Second Division
15 Blackpool v Watford
16 Brentford v Bournemouth
17 Bristol Rovers v Northampton
18 Chesterfield v Fulham
19 Luton v Wycombe
20 Millwall v Gillingham
21 Plymouth v Preston
22 Southend v Grimsby
23 Walsall v Burnley
24 Wrexham v Carlisle
25 York City v Wigan

Third Division
26 Brighton v Hartlepool
27 Hull v Darlington
28 Leyton Orient v Lincoln
29 Macclesfield v Rotherham
30 Mansfield v Shrewsbury
31 Notts County v Barnet
32 Peterborough v Exeter
33 Rochdale v Chester
34 Scunthorpe v Colchester
35 Torquay v Cambridge United

Tennents Scottish Cup Fifth round
– Falkirk v St Johnstone
– Hearts v Ayr

Bell's Scottish League Premier Division
– Dunfermline v Motherwell

First Division
– Raith v Airdrie
– St Mirren v Stirling

Second Division
36 Brechin v Livingston
37 Clyde v Stenhousemuir
38 Clydebank v East Fife
– Inverness CT v Stranraer
39 Queen of the South v Forfar

Third Division
– Albion Rovers v Dumbarton
40 Alloa v Montrose
– Arbroath v Ross County
41 Cowdenbeath v East Stirling
42 Queen's Park v Berwick

GM Vauxhall Conference
43 Gateshead v Kidderminster
– Halifax v Dover
44 Kettering v Southport
45 Leek v Farnborough
46 Northwich v Hereford
47 Rushden v Cheltenham
48 Slough v Hednesford
49 Stevenage v Stalybridge
– Telford v Hayes
– Woking v Welling
– Yeovil v Morecambe

TOMORROW

FA Cup sixth round
Arsenal v West Ham (3.0)
Newcastle v Barnsley (5.0)

FA Carling Premiership
Chelsea v Aston Villa (3.0)

Nationwide League Third Division
Swansea v Cardiff (12.0)

Tennents Scottish Cup Fifth round
Dundee Utd v Celtic (3.0)

Fame in the Orient as journeymen Brits spice up Hong Kong

Hong Kong

JAPAN and South Korea have been warming up for the World Cup by contesting a four-nation international tournament, the Dynasty Cup, in Yokohama and Tokyo this week.

China and Hong Kong are the other teams involved. The Hong Kong XI is, however, not a proper international selection but a representative team from the Hong Kong league – which has given some journeyman professionals from Britain an unexpected taste of football on the world stage.

The Hong Kong team made a big impact well beyond Asia in January when they beat England's subsequent conquerors, Chile, 3-1 in the Carlsberg Cup, another four-nation tournament, on "home" soil in Hong Kong. Among the players that overcame the Chileans were Martin Kuhl, a much-travelled English midfield enforcer, and two former Tottenham reserves: the goalkeeper Peter Guthrie and the Irish midfielder Tim O'Shea.

Hong Kong's Brazilian coach, Sebastião Araujo, took some flak for picking an entire squad of foreigners for the Carlsberg Cup, so most of the party that went to the Dynasty Cup were Hong Kong nationals. The reduced number of expatriates included Gary McKeown, a former Dundee midfielder, and Dale Tempest, a striker who saw service with Fulham, Huddersfield and Colchester but has been based in Hong Kong for several years.



FOOTBALL AROUND THE WORLD
BY RUPERT METCALF

Tempest, who scored for Hong Kong in a 5-1 defeat to Japan on Wednesday, has – like Michael Robinson, the former Liverpool striker, in Spain – made a name for himself in English-speaking Asia as a television commentator. Like his British team-mates, Hong Kong has given him a status and fame denied to him back home.

Croatia

CROATIA'S top players suffered a humiliating defeat on Wednesday – losing 3-1 in a friendly match against a "reserve" team chosen by journalists unhappy with the squad of the coach, Miroslav Blazevic.

Blazevic, whose relations with the press have frequently been frosty, has been accused of fielding a team full of individuals with no game plan. Wednesday's game in Zagreb will have fuelled the antagonism, with the journalists' team, who had not played together before, looking more compact than their opponents, who bizarrely played the closing minutes with just 10 men.

The captain of the "first" team, Zvonimir Boban, scored in the first half but left the field midway though the second without being replaced by Blazevic. He stripped off his captain's armband following the "second" team's third goal.

"I am a professional and I approach my job professionally. When others behave differently, I'd rather distance myself from them than bear it," Boban said afterwards.

95 days... and counting until the World Cup finals begin in France

BRAZIL are the world champions and they are the favourites to retain their crown this year – but their coach, Mario Zagallo, is under pressure.

Despite the fact that a virtual shadow squad was sent to the tournament, Brazil's poor performance in the Concacaf Gold Cup last month has caused much concern. This week Zico, a flamboyant midfielder at the 1982 World Cup, was appointed as technical co-ordinator to work with Zagallo – who held a similar post alongside the coach, Carlos Alberto Parreira, at USA 94.

"I am not concerned about whether I will be above Zagallo or under him," Zico said.

FAIR PLAY LEAGUE

	Referee	Games	Red	Yellow	Pts	Ave
1	G Poll	16	7	65	100	6.25
2	G Willard	14	4	64	84	6.00
3	M Reed	14	2	63	73	5.21
4	G Barber	15	3	58	73	4.87
5	J Winter	15	2	59	69	4.60
6	P Durkin	16	3	56	71	4.44
7	S Dunn	12	2	43	53	4.42
8	D Elleray	15	2	54	64	4.27
9	P Jones	14	2	48	58	4.14
10	U Rennie	15	1	55	60	4.00
11	M Riley	14	2	43	53	3.79
12	A Wilkie	16	2	49	59	3.69
13	K Burge	13	2	36	46	3.54
14	P Alcock	16	1	49	54	3.38
15	N Barry	14	1	43	48	3.43
16	G Ashby	15	2	41	51	3.40
17	D Gallagher	14	2	37	47	3.36
18	M Bodenham	15	0	46	46	3.07
19	S Lodge	15	2	35	45	3.00

(Premiership matches only; Includes abandoned matches; Red cards: 5pts Yellow: 1pt)

UNFAIR PLAY LEAGUE

		Played	Red	Yellow	Pts	Ave
1	Coventry	28	5	53	78	2.79
2	Leeds	28	3	59	74	2.64
3	Chelsea	27	3	57	72	2.67
4	Everton	28	4	54	74	2.64
5	Bolton	27	4	50	70	2.59
6	Arsenal	27	2	57	67	2.48
7	C Palace	28	2	55	65	2.32
8	Derby	29	1	60	65	2.24
9	Sheff Wed	28	3	47	62	2.21
10	Blackburn	27	3	43	58	2.15
11	West Ham	28	3	43	58	2.07
12	Soton	28	2	46	56	2.00
13	Newcastle	27	2	43	53	1.96
14	Man Utd	26	0	47	47	1.88
15	Barnsley	27	0	44	44	1.63
16	Wimbledon	28	1	39	44	1.57
17	Liverpool	28	1	38	43	1.54
18	Tottenham	29	1	39	44	1.52
19	Leicester	28	1	36	41	1.46
20	A Villa	28	1	34	39	1.39

(Premiership matches only; Includes abandoned matches; Red cards. 5pts. Yellow: 1pt)

Weekend fixture guide

TODAY

Football

3.0 unless stated

FA CARLSBERG VASE Sixth-round replay: Tow Law Town v Sudbury Wanderers.

RYMAN LEAGUE Premier Division: Basingstoke v Carshalton; Chesham v Hendon; Dagenham & Redbridge v Aylesbury; Grays and v Northfleet v Kingstonian; Harrow Borough v Bromley; Heybridge v Purfleet; Hitchin v Bishop's Stortford; St Albans v Enfield; Sutton Utd v Dulwich; Walton & Hersham v Boreham Wood; Yeading v Oxford City. First Division: Abingdon Town v Molesey; Aldershot v Uxbridge; Berkhamsted v Thame; Billericay v Croydon; Bognor Regis v Hampton; Leyton Pennant v Chertsey; Staines v Leatherhead; Wembley v Grays; Whyteleafe v Barton Rovers; Wokingham v Maidenhead Utd; Worthing v Romford. Second Division: Banstead v Chalfont St Peter; Bedford v Barking; Cheshunt v Bracknell; Edgware v Leighton; Egham v Hungerford; Marlow v Tooting & Mitcham; Metropolitan Police v Canvey Island; Northwood v Horsham; Tilbury v Basingstoke; Windsor & Eton v Wealdstone; Witham v Wivenhoe. Third Division: Clapton v Ilford; Dorking v Camberley; East Thurrock v Lewes; Flackwell Heath v Hornchurch; Ford v Croydon Athletic; Hemel Hempstead v Aveley; Hertford v Epsom & Ewell; Kingsbury v Harlow; Southall v Corinthian Casuals; Ware v Wingate & Finchley.

UNIBOND LEAGUE Premier Division: Alfreton v Blyth; Altrincham v Accrington Stanley; Bishop Auckland v Gainsborough; Boston Utd v Spennymoor; Emley v Colwyn Bay; Frickley v Marine; Hyde Utd v Chorley; Leigh RMI v Guiseley; Radcliffe Borough v Barrow; Runcorn v Winsford. First Division: Bradford Park Avenue v Congleton; Belper v Flixton; Burton v Droylesden; Eastwood Town v Netherfield; Great Harwood v Unsworth Utd; Matlock v Gretna; Whitby v Ashton; Whitley Bay v Stocksbridge; Workington v Harrogate Town; Worksop v Fernley.

DR MARTENS LEAGUE Premier Division: Atherstone v Ashford; Burton Albion v Gloucester; Cambridge City v Halesowen; Forest Green v Gresley; King's Lynn v Merthyr; Salisbury v Bath; Stittingbourne v Crawley; Tamworth v St Leonards; Worcester v Dorchester. Midland Division: Bradley v Wisbech; Grantham v Evesham Utd; Hinckley Utd v Paget; Ilkeston v Corby; Moor Green v Bedworth; Raunds v Stafford; Stourbridge v Redditch; Sutton Coldfield v Solihull. Southern Division: Clevedon v Weymouth; Erith & Belvedere v Fisher; Margate v Chelmsford; Newport IoW v Baldock; Tonbridge v Fleet; Trowbridge v Cinderford; Weston-super-Mare v Cirencester; Witney v Dartford; Yate v Fareham.

WINSTONLEAD KENT LEAGUE First Division: Chatham v Beckenham; Corinthian v Canterbury; Cray v Deal; Crockenhill v Herne Bay; Faversham v Whitstable; Greenwich Borough v Swanley Furness; Lordswood v Ramsgate; Slade Green v Hythe; Thamesmead v Erith; Tunbridge Wells v Sheppey; VCD Athletic v Folkestone Invicta.

UNIJET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE First Division: Arundel v Peacehaven & Telscombe; Chichester v Burgess Hill; Eastbourne Town v Littlehampton; Hailsham v Horsham YMCA; Hassocks v Mile Oak; Portfield v Whitehawk; Redhill v Ringmer; Saltdean v Shoreham; Wick v Pagham.

UNLSPORT UNITED COUNTIES LEAGUE Premier Division: Bourne v Stotfold; Desborough v Kempston; Ford Sports v Potton; Holbeach v Cogenhoe; Mirrlees Blackstone v Buckingham; Northampton Spencer v Long Buckby; Wellingborough v Eynesbury; Wootton v Yaxley.

SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE Premier Division: Bridgwater v Barnstaple; Brislington v Chard; Calne v Bristol Manor Farm; Chippenham v Backwell; Keynsham v Bridport; Torrington v Mellsham. Les Phillips Cup quarter-finals: Elmore v Clyst; Mangotsfield v Bideford; Paulton v Taunton.

NORTHERN COUNTIES EAST LEAGUE Premier Division: Arnold v Pontefract Cole; Brigg v Armthorpe Welfare; Curzon Ashton v Thackley; Ecclesfield v Sheffield; Glasshoughton Welfare v North Ferriby; Hallam v Dereby; Hatfield Main v Ossett Town; Maltby v Selby; Pickering v Ossett Albion.

NORTH WEST COUNTIES LEAGUE First Division: Atherton LR v Newcastle Town; Burscough v Clitheroe; Chadderton v Darwen; Glossop North End v Holker Old Boys; Kidsgrove v Prescot Cables; Moseley v Nantwich; Ramsbottom v Atherton Collieries; Rossendale v Blackpool Rovers; St Helens v Haslingden; Vauxhall GM v Salford; Warrington v Maine Road.

JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE: Lymington v Christchurch; Aerostructures v Downton; BAT Sports v Bemerton Heath; Brockenhurst v Totton; Cowes Sports v Whitchurch; East Cowes Vics v Romsey; Eastleigh v Andover; Gosport Borough v Bournemouth; Portsmouth RN v Thatcham.

JEWSON EASTERN LEAGUE Premier Division: Bury Town v Sudbury Town; Ely v Felixstowe Port & Town; Gorleston v Histon; Soham v Woodbridge; Stowmarket v Great Yarmouth; Tiptree v Felixstowe; Watton v Herwich & Parkeston; Wroxham v Halstead.

INTERLINK EXPRESS MIDLAND ALLIANCE: Blowich v Boldmere St Michaels; Bridgnorth v Wednesfield; Chasetown v Halesowen; Kings Norton v Rocester; Oldbury v Pelsall Villa; Rushall v Knypersley Victoria; Stapenhill v Willenhall; Stratford v Barwell; West Midlands Police v Sandwell Borough.

ARNOTT INSURANCE NORTHERN LEAGUE First Division: Bedlington Terriers v Stockton; Billingham Town v Seaham Red Star; Dunston FB v Northallerton; Easington v Durham; Jarrow v Consett; Morpeth v Gulsborough; Murton v Billingham Synthonia; Penrith v Crook; RTM Newcastle v Shildon.

SMIRNOFF IRISH LEAGUE Premier Division: Coleraine v Ballymena; Crusaders v Cliftonville; Glenavon v Portadown; Linfield v Glentoran; Omagh Town v Ards. First Division: Ballyclare v Bangor; Dungannon Swifts v Carrick; Larne v Distillery; Newry v Limavady Utd.

LEAGUE OF WALES: Caernarfon Town v TNS Llansantffraid (2.0); Cwmbran v Barry Town (2.0); Ebbw Vale v Cemaes Bay (2.30); Haverfordwest v Bangor City (2.30); Inter Cable-Tel Cardiff v Caersws (2.0); Newtown v Aberystwyth (2.30); Porthmadog v Connah's Quay (2.30); Rhyl v Flint Town (2.30); Welshpool v Conwy (2.30).

HARP LAGER NATIONAL LEAGUE OF IRELAND Premier Division: Kilkenny City v Dundalk (7.30).

FAI HARP LAGER CUP Quarter-final: Athlone Town v Longford Town (7.30).

Cricket

TOUR MATCH (First day of three, including play tomorrow): Kensington Oval, Barbados: Barbados v England.

Rugby Union

3.0 unless stated

FIVE NATIONS Championship
France v Ireland (2.0)
(at Stade de France)
Wales v Scotland (4.0)
(at Wembley)

ALLIED DUNBAR PREMIERSHIP ONE: Harlequins v Richmond; Leicester v Northampton. Premiership Two: Blackheath v Bedford; Coventry v Waterloo; Exeter v Rotherham; Fylde v Moseley; Wakefield v Orrell.

JEWSON NATIONAL LEAGUE ONE: Leeds v London Welsh (2.0); Liverpool St Helens v Lydney; Morley v Harrogate; Nottingham v Wharfedale; Reading v Rosslyn Park; Rugby v Otley; Worcester v Newbury (2.30). Two North: Aspatria v Lichfield; Barningham/Solihull v Preston Grasshoppers; Kendal v Manchester; Nuneaton v Hinckley; Sandal v Wilmington Park; Sheffield v Stourbridge; Walsall v Sedgley Park. Two South: Barking v Esher; Camberley v Bridgwater; Havant v Clifton; Henley v Cheltenham (2.30); Metropolitan Police v Weston-super-Mare; Plymouth v Redruth; Tabard v North Walsham.

CLUB MATCH: Cambridge University v Kanton University.

Hockey

MEN'S NATIONAL LEAGUE First Division: Havant v St Albans (2.0).

ESL SOUTH Premier: Bournemouth v Beckenham; Chichester v Purley; Eastcote v Maidenhead; High Wycombe v Archarians; Ramgarhia v Gore Court; Trojans v Richmond; Tunbridge Wells v Fareham; Wimbledon v Herne Bay; Winchester v City of Portsmouth; Woking v Old Whitgiftians.

ADNAMS EAST Premier: Cambridge City v Crosby; Colchester v Clacton; Ipswich v Cambridge Univ; Luton Town v Bishop's Stortford; Peterborough Town v Sudbury.

WEST OF ENGLAND & SOUTH WALES Premier: Bath Bucos v Taunton Vale; Cheltenham v Bristol Univ; Clevedon v Whitchurch; Exeter Univ v Weston-super-Mare; Swansea v Robinsons.

NORTH First Division: Chester v Sen Rhydding; Formby v Sweinet; Harrogate v Norton; Sheffield Bankers v Durham Univ; Timperley v Neston; Wigan v Southport.

DTZ MIDLAND Premier: Blossomfield v Olton & West Warwick; Coventry & North Warwick v Bloxwich; Edgbaston v North Notts; Khalsa v Harborne; North Stafford v Northampton Saints; Nottingham v Hampton-in-Arden.

WOMEN'S NATIONAL LEAGUE Premier: Doncaster v Clifton Scottish Life (1.30); Ipswich v Sutton Coldfield (1.30); Olton Tenaquast v Hightown (1.30); Trojans v Slough (1.30). First Division: Bradford Swithenbank v Loughborough Students (1.30); Chelmsford Highway v Bracknell (1.30); Leicester v Canterbury (1.30); Sunderland Bedans v Wimbledon (1.30). Second Division: Aldridge v West Witney (1.30); Blueharts v Old Loughtonians (1.30); Poynton v Ealing (1.30); Sherwood v Woking (1.30).

WOMEN'S SOUTH First Division: Dulwich v Hampstead & Westminster; Horsham v Tulse Hill; Maidenhead v Reading; Winchester v Southampton; Winchmore Hill v Hendon.

ROYAL AL-RAISEL WOMEN'S MIDLAND Premier: Belper v North Staffs; Crimson Ramblers v Pickwick; Leicester v Hampton-in-Arden; Luton v Kettering.

WOMEN'S NORTH First Division: Blackburn v Sheffield; Chester v Welton; Liverpool Sefton v Leyland Motors; York v Winnington Park.

WOMEN'S WEST OF ENGLAND Premier: Colwall v Yate; Exmouth v Cheltenham; Redland v Exeter; St Austell v Bournemouth; Taunton Vale v Leominster.

WOMEN'S EAST Premier: Dereham v Bury St Edmunds; St Albans v Harleston Magpies; Sevenoaks v Ipswich; Welwyn Garden City v Cambridge City.

TRYSPORTS WOMEN'S THREE COUNTIES First Division: Milton Keynes v Wycombe Rye; Milton Keynes Ite v Bracknell; Oxford Hawks v Maidenhead; Oxford Univ v City of Oxford; Ranelagh v Farnham Common; Reading v Henley; Sonning v Windsor; West Witney v Newbury.

Basketball

BUDWEISER LEAGUE: Crystal Palace v Chester Jets (7.30); Leicester Riders v Derby Storm (7.30); Manchester Giants v Worthing Bears (7.30); Birmingham Bullets v Greater London Leopards (7.30); Watford Royals v Newcastle Eagles (7.30).

Ice hockey

SUPERLEAGUE Play-offs Group A: Ayr Scottish Eagles v Sheffield Steelers (6.35); Newcastle Cobras v Nottingham Panthers (6.30). Group B: Bracknell Bees v Basingstoke Bison (6.0); Cardiff Devils v Manchester Storm (6.35).

Other sports

BOWLS: English Women's Indoor National Championships (Yarmouth).

BOXING: World Boxing Organisation heavyweight championship: Herbie Hide (Norwich, holder) v Orlin Norris (US) (Rivermead Leisure Centre, Reading).

ROWING: Women's head of the river race (River Thames, London).

TABLE TENNIS: English National Championships (Bath).

TOMORROW

Football

SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE Premier Division: Tiverton v Westbury (3.0).

FAI HARP LAGER CUP Quarter-finals: 6 Cork City v Sligo Rovers (2.0); UCD v Finn Harps (3.15).

WOMEN'S WORLD CUP Qualifier: Republic of Ireland v Wales (2.0) *(at Carlisle Grounds, Bray)*.

Rugby League

FIRST DIVISION: Dewsbury v Keighley (3.0); Leigh v Wakefield (3.0); Rochdale v Featherstone (3.0); Whitehaven v Hull Kingston Rovers (3.30); Widnes v Hunslet (3.0).

FRIENDLY MATCH: Oldham v London (3.0).

Rugby Union

ALLIED DUNBAR PREMIERSHIP ONE: Bristol v Bath (3.0); Saracens v Wasps (3.0). Premiership Two: London Scottish v West Hartlepool (3.0).

AIB LEAGUE Second Division: Skerries v Sundays Well (2.30).

Hockey

NATIONAL LEAGUE First Division: Bournville v Blueharts (2.30); Bromley v Chelmsford (1.0); Harleston Magpies v St Albans (2.0); Havant v Hull (2.0); Ipsa v Brooklands (1.30); Loughborough Students v Firebrands (2.30); Oxford Hawks v Hampstead & Westminster (12.0); Oxford Univ v Indian Gymkhana (2.0); Sheffield v Gloucester City (2.30); Surbiton v Lewes (2.30); Warrington v Stourport (1.30).

Basketball

UNI-BALL TROPHY Final: London Towers v Sheffield Sharks (6.30) *(at NEC, Birmingham)*.

BUDWEISER LEAGUE: Newcastle Eagles v Crystal Palace (6.30).

Ice hockey

SUPERLEAGUE Play-offs Group A: Nottingham Panthers v Ayr Scottish Eagles (7.0). Group B: Basingstoke Bison v Cardiff Devils (6.0); Manchester Storm v Bracknell Bees (5.0).

Other sports

TABLE TENNIS: English National Championships (Bath).

Redknapp turns fortune hunter

The West Ham manager tells **Glenn Moore** how he hopes luck is finally on his side for tomorrow's FA Cup tie at Highbury



Harry Redknapp at training yesterday: After Monday's draw against Arsenal, West Ham's manager believes his team can improve on that tomorrow Photograph: Peter Jay

EIGHT TEAMS left and the FA Cup has reached the stage where managers, players and fans alike start looking for reasons to say "this is our year, our name's on the Cup because..."

At Barnsley, they have noted that the last time they won the pot the Titanic went down – 86 years later the White Star liner is going down nightly at Odeons all over the country.

At Coventry, they look to the historic first-ever win at Villa Park in the fifth round. At Leeds, they have been handed four successive home draws against lower-division opposition. And in the other quarter-final, West Ham, having won a penalty shoot-out at Ewood Park after apparently throwing the tie away at home, travel to Arsenal tomorrow convinced that Lady Luck is on Harry Redknapp's claret-and-blue shoulder.

If she is, says the West Ham manager, it will be for the first time where the FA Cup is concerned. In more than 30 years in the game as player, coach and manager, he has never reached the sixth round before. A teenage apprentice when West Ham won the competition in 1964, he had left for John Bond's Bournemouth by the time they finally returned to Wembley to beat Fulham in 1975.

"I don't know if I've even been close enough to be unlucky to be honest," said Redknapp, as he cast his mind back over years of FA Cup failure. Then he remembered one example, with Bournemouth at home to Manchester United in the fifth round in 1989. It was 1-1, Trevor Aylott and Mark Hughes the scorers, when Luther Blissett was presented with an open goal in injury-time.

Redknapp recalled, with a mixture of admiration and hurt: "Steve Bruce fouled him, he jumped on Luther's heel just as he was about to slide the ball into the back of an empty net. It put him off balance and Luther screwed the ball wide. It was the last kick of the match. We all thought Luther had missed an open goal from five yards out with no one to beat, but it turned out Brucie had flipped him up in the air.

"We all missed it, the ref, everyone. Alex Ferguson said Bruce had told him his only chance was to foul Luther, but it wasn't until we saw the video we knew what happened. Alex was in deep trouble that year and if we'd knocked them out who knows what would have happened.

"He was still toiling when we went up for the replay at Old Trafford. We were much the better side, then one of our players hit a 40-yard back-pass straight to Brian McClair. His goal knocked us out of the Cup and took the pressure off Alex."

Five years earlier the result had gone the other way, Redknapp, in his third month as a manager, guiding Bournemouth to victory over United, who were then the FA Cup holders.

Having required a replay to get past Windsor & Eton in the second round, Bournemouth beat United 2-0 in the third. "It was a big day for me," Redknapp says, "probably the day that got me established at Bournemouth. I had a good run there after that. To beat them quite comfortably on the day was a terrific result for us."

Not that everyone was impressed. Redknapp adds: "On the Monday we trained on an artificial pitch. It was one of the old surfaces, not astro. We weren't supposed to use it but the gate was open, there was no one around, so we thought we might as well.

"When we finished we found the groundsman had locked us in and put a bolt upon the gate. That was Bournemouth for you. On Saturday night we'd been on *Match of the Day* and were the toast of the country, on the Monday this geezer has rode up on his bike, thought: 'I'll show them' and locked us in. We had an 18-foot fence to climb to get out. That certainly brought us all down to earth."

It is an experience Redknapp has kept with him. As he sits in his office at West Ham's spacious but homely Chadwell Heath training ground, not far from where he grew up the son of a Stepney docker, he adds: "It makes you appreciate how lucky you are when you get to have a training ground. It's a different ball game at that level.

"We used to be out there for hours after training looking for balls. If we lost one it was a catastrophe. We didn't have a laundry and loads of kits, the players had to take their own kit home to wash every day. That's why I like loaning players out, I think it's the greatest education any player can have.

"Rio Ferdinand went on loan last year to Bournemouth, Frank Lampard to Swansea. I think it was the making of them. They suddenly realise how lucky they are. They have a woman cooking lunches for them, got a nice changing-room, a cup of tea when they finish training, sauna in the dressing-room – it's a different world. They go down to Swansea, probably have to drive to an windy old training place and are very lucky if they even get a cup of tea after."

Managers once learned the same way and while John Gregory has had an apprenticeship at Wycombe, Gianluca Vialli, fresh from pristine Premiership dressing-room to *nouveau riche* boardroom, is more typical of new appointees at the big clubs.

"People used to start from humble beginnings and worked their way up, but that has changed now and there are a lot more foreign coaches coming in. Martin O'Neill did it, and Jim Smith and Ron Atkinson, there are still a few. You learn so much about every aspect of running a football club at a lower level."

Redknapp worked in Seattle as player-coach and at Oxford City as assistant manager (to his friend, the late Bobby Moore) before moving to Bournemouth, initially as player-coach. He became their longest-serving (nine years) and most successful manager, but his fond memories of Dean Court are scarred by tragedy.

In 1990, while following the World Cup in Italy, he was involved in a car crash which killed Brian Tiler, the club's managing director, and left Redknapp with a fractured skull, broken leg and cracked ribs. "It was a tough old time, it just goes to show you never now what is around the corner, one minute things are going lovely, the next minute..."

"I'd be lying, though, if I said it changed my approach to life. It should have done, perhaps, but within a few months I was back into football, flying around like a lunatic. The doctors told me I was not to watch any games, but I was still manager at Bournemouth. I went to watch them at places like Reading and Aldershot wearing dark glasses with my coat up round my neck. I just couldn't stay away."

Tomorrow he will be at Highbury, looking tense and overwrought as usual. Having made a nervous start to their campaign against Emley, West Ham have won at both Manchester City and Blackburn away and thus travel with confidence but, due to injury and suspension, hardly any strikers. Redknapp will be hoping Dame Fortune, at least, is finally available to play her part.

A swift departure by one of the guilty parties is par for the course



OLIVIA BLAIR

ON FOOTBALLERS' FAMOUS FALLING-OUTS

SO, Keith Gillespie has, allegedly, joined Jimmy Hasselbaink on the list of players who have felt the full force of Alan Shearer's physical presence in recent weeks. The difference, of course, is that Hasselbaink's experience came on the pitch (during Leeds' draw at St James' Park) while Gillespie's occurred outside a Dublin bar during a golfing trip aimed, ironically, at fostering team-spirit among Newcastle's players.

Subsequent reports have hinted that Gillespie will be on his way out of St James' Park quicker than you can say head-lock. After all, there's no doubting whose side Kenny Dalglish would take, should it come to that.

However, footballers don't necessarily have to get on off the pitch to gel on it. In life, you don't actually have to like someone to appreciate their ability, and the same applies to football. Sure, it helps – research done in the 1980s proved that players pass more to their best mate than any other player – but it can hinder, too, in what a psychologist would call "social loafing", but which in football would be better explained as the "Spice Boys phenomenon".

In other words, you have to be focused individually as well as strong collectively, as Manchester United seem to be. As Ruud Gullit maintains, you don't have to be bosom buddies with your team-mates to play with them. "Glenn and I were not friends," Gullit has admitted of his erstwhile manager and team-mate, Glenn Hoddle. "You do not have to like them to play for them. But there must be respect."

Mind you, Gullit should know. The Dutch are infamous past masters of the kind of in-house fighting that undermines team spirit and hampers collective potential. Like Johan Cruyff in 1978, Gullit refused to play in the 1994 World Cup, while Edgar Davids was sent home in an internecine row from *Euro 96*.

It was the latest in a litany of quarrels to upset the Dutch camp during major tournaments, but the strands of that particular argument run far deeper than most of the disputes between team-mates, which are generally nothing more than the proverbial handbags at 10 paces; the result of two highly competitive characters crossing swords in a (usually) highly charged environment.

They don't come much more highly charged than a Merseyside derby, which is probably why Bruce Grobbelaar almost throttled a then fledgling Steve McManaman after McManaman's poor clearance had gifted Everton a goal in September 1993; or than the Champions' League, especially given Blackburn's record at the time (they hadn't won a game and scored just once). Considering those circumstances, it's hardly surprising frustration turned to fisticuffs between David Batty and Graeme Le Saux when Blackburn visited Spartak Moscow in 1995.

It was similar heat of the moment stuff when Benito Carbone and David Hirst tangled during Sheffield Wednesday's 5-2 defeat by Derby this season, and when West Ham's John Moncur slapped Eyal Berkovitch during a game against Chelsea. Berkovitch later described Moncur as "the most jealous man I've ever met", but lasting repercussions are usually rare. Craig Levein claims he bore no grudge against Graeme Hogg after the Hearts team-mates were sent off for scrapping during a pre-season "friendly", despite the fact Levein was later stripped of the club captaincy.

He maintains these fracas "happen all the time, particularly in training when players get over-enthusiastic", which is a view Stan Collymore might endorse. Collymore, who reputedly fell out so badly with his Nottingham Forest team-mates they refused to pass the ball to him, denies that Colin Cooper hit him for not pulling his weight, but admits hitting Alfe Inge Haland in training: "His studs went down my Achilles tendons half a dozen times," Collymore remembers. "When I asked him why, he told me to 'eff off'. So I hit him once. But that's happened a thousand times at a thousand clubs. There was the thing with Robbie Fowler and Neil Ruddock when Razor hit Robbie 'cos Robbie cut up his trainers. But as soon as it happened it was over."

The fact that Collymore soon left for Liverpool suggests the reality is somewhat different. In fact, a swift departure by one of the guilty parties tends to be par for the course. Hirst played just once more for Wednesday after tangling with Carbone; Le Saux couldn't wait to get on his bike back to Chelsea while Steve Lomas, who apparently clashed verbally and physically with Georgi Kinkladze during a Manchester City training session, was soon heading south to West Ham.

Mike Flanagan actually walked out of The Valley after falling out with his Charlton striking partner Derek Hales. The pair were sent off for fighting in an FA Cup tie at Maidstone in January 1979, and when Hales was sacked and then reinstated, Flanagan walked out and joined Crystal Palace (he later returned, but not before Hales had gone for good). Rumours that one was seeing the other's partner were unconfirmed.

It's doubtful that a post-match shandy would have settled that dispute, but it did the trick for Terry Venables and Dave Mackay after they clashed in Venables' first training session: "He hit me twice below the belt so I punched him smack in the face," recalls Venables, "but I had a ring on which damaged my knuckle and sliced his cheek open. All the boys jumped in to break us up but by then honours were about even."

Of course, such scenarios are all part of the Crazy Gang's image, although there have been times when harmless horse-play turned sour. Keith Curle gave too much lip to big John Gayle and got a thick one in return (and was soon on his way to Manchester City), while John Fashanu karate-kicked Lawrie Sanchez. Sanchez didn't stay long at Wimbledon after that. After all, who would after tangling with Fash the Bash?

Time to rid ourselves of racists

FAN'S EYE VIEW
NO 244
LEEDS UNITED
BY
GAVIN BURNAGE

"WE ARE the champions – champions of Europe". It pounded, proud and relentless, from the half-time whistle until the players re-emerged. We bounced hypnotically, while the home crowd stared in bemusement. Shirts were removed, even in sub-zero temperatures. Cameramen were drawn to the fattest among us.

"Crazy," said Alan Green on Radio Five, "but at least they're not kicking lumps out of each other." So it was, at most away matches, that for 15 minutes we were more entertaining than the football being played: last season was George Graham's low-goal cold war against relegation.

Some muttered that Leeds United have never been champions of Europe.

It should have so been back in 1975, but dodgy refs are nothing new, and for many Leeds fans of the time, the chant is a proud nod in the direction of the great team denied controversially against Bayern Munich in Paris. The fans of the 1980s, who travelled to humbler Second Division haunts, sang it to remind themselves – and the players – that Leeds United was a great club. It still comes out in the face of adversity: 8-3 down on aggregate at PSV Eindhoven in 1995, it went on incessantly for the last half hour of the game. We went home defiant, still Leeds and proud of it.

Some also mutter about a less worthy past. Society's violence, racism and hatred was to be seen in Leeds fans when pride juddered into craziness, the malevolent sort which did involve kicking lumps. Those days are not forgotten, and neither have they gone entirely. On 7 February at Leicester City, the first 20 minutes was marred by a small, vociferous group (maybe 50 out of the 2500 of us there) leading the chanting of racist and extremist songs. Similar things have happened away at Nottingham Forest and Coventry over the past few seasons, but this time it was more ugly and noticeable than ever. For some, pride in the champions of Europe is corrupted deeply.

The club has decided to act, as in the past, by vowing to identify and ban anyone proved to be involved with "inappropriate behaviour". We thought our compulsory away game membership scheme, re-introduced this season at the fans' request, would assist in this, but it seems that seats cannot be linked to membership numbers: now that will change. There is also a hotline for fans to report instances of racial abuse: 0113 226 6117.

We have had our say in others ways, too. A web site (http://canto.mml.cam.ac.uk/leedslist/luar.html) containing comments taken from the unofficial Leeds United Internet e-mail list illustrates that many of us feel strongly about the issue and were appalled by what happened at Filbert Street. It's a small gesture, hardly the stuff of which rabid *Star* and *Mirror* headlines are made – but it's better, as they say, than a kick in the teeth. It also tries to spell out why racism is wrong and dangerous, and what each of *us* can *do* – exactly the sort of information Leeds United and so many other clubs should be providing on a regular basis in match programmes and free handouts.

Then maybe, just maybe, at least some of those who joined in with those singing racist chants would have been able to think better of it.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

● Everyone in the team would agree that we are absolutely as good as them. **David Lloyd**, England cricket coach, after the 242-run Test defeat to West Indies.

● I picked up my artificial arm and threatened it. **Matthew Butson**, New Zealand Paralympic skier, on the wild monkey that leaped into his hotel room from the balcony.

● At the start of the season you're strong, but you must be as strong in March, when the fish are down. **Gianluca Vialli**, Chelsea player-manager.

● I was never 100 per cent sold on him. And it looks as if I have been proved right. **Mike McDonald**, Sheffield Utd chairman, on the resignation of Nigel Spackman as manager.

● A lot of attitudes have changed but you still get the obvious knockers. **Julia Lee**, rugby league referee, on how spectators react to her.

● There was no talk of an apology. No talk of the incident. **Jacques Villeneuve**, Formula 1 world champion, after meeting Michael Schumacher by chance in Melbourne this week.

● My driving was terrible today. The best part of my game lately has been driving the cart. **Casey Martin**, disabled golfer who recently won the right to use his cart in Tour events, on his return to competition, in Texas.

● Obnoxious, the Goon from Troon, golf's Gael-force windbag. *Sports Illustrated* editorial on Colin Montgomerie.

Blades find Cup brings welcome distraction

Guy Hodgson reports on a big weekend for Yorkshire in the FA Cup quarter-finals, while **Nick Harris** (below) looks at the team news

THERE was a time when football clubs would use simple methods to take players' minds off a big match. Don Revie swore by bingo, Peter Reid just swears, but Sheffield United have taken the art of distraction to new heights this week.

In the space of five days, the Blades have lost, in turn, a manager, an unbeaten record, their chairman and most of their credibility as more rattles have been thrown out of prams than at a pre-nursery crèche. Little wonder Dean Saunders said yesterday it had been difficult to concentrate on today's FA Cup quarter-final at Coventry.

"As soon as the final whistle went against Ipswich on Tuesday, and the disappointment of not winning the game had gone, we should have started thinking about playing Coventry," Saunders, who misses the tie because of a hamstring injury, said. "But that was not the case."

Safe to say that when the dressing-room door opens and someone announces "the manager", United's players will pay more attention than normal. Just to see it who is for a start, or, if someone has been appointed, to see if he has survived the coach ride down the M1.

Knowing the perversity of the Cup, Sheffield United will get at least a replay out of the trip to Highfield Road and it will be the visitors' relief at being able to put their off-pitch problems behind them that will worry Coventry most. In normal circumstances they would be favourites, but no one would accuse Bramall Lane of normality this week.

As Nigel Spackman said before his resignation in the week: "Of course we'll be underdogs, and in a sense we are surprised to have reached the last eight. But that will work in our favour. You only have to look at last year and see how well Chesterfield did to realise anything can happen in the FA Cup."

The smoke of battle bellowing out of Sheffield has largely hidden the fact that Yorkshire has got three teams in the quarter-finals, the most likely of whom are Leeds United. A kind draw has continued until today when they meet non-Premiership Wolves, although there would be a confident beat coming out of Elland Road no matter who they were playing.

Leeds finished Wednesday's win over Tottenham with six 21-year-olds on the pitch and as five regular first-teamers are again available, their manager, George Graham, said: "It gives me a headache for probably the first time since I came to the club. It was wonderful to think I had half a team watching from the stands against Tottenham, yet we won fairly comfortably in the end. Do I make changes? It's a nice dilemma to have."

As for Wolves, who knows how they will play? Premiership one day, Second Division the next, they defeated Wimbledon fairly comfortably in the fifth round, but have not sparkled in the League since.

Barnsley are the third Yorkshire survivors, although they have shunned the FA Cup this week rather than embracing it. Not that they are taking tomorrow's tie at Newcastle lightly, but because superstition has prevented them going to see the trophy on display at the Littlewoods store just a few hundred yards from Oakwell.

Superstitious or not, Barnsley have accounted for Bolton, Tottenham and Manchester United so far and the tie will be far from the walkover it might have seemed three months ago.

"Manchester United and Teddy Sheringham one week, Newcastle and Alan Shearer the next – it's a dream come true for me," Chris Morgan, their 21-year-old centre-back, said.

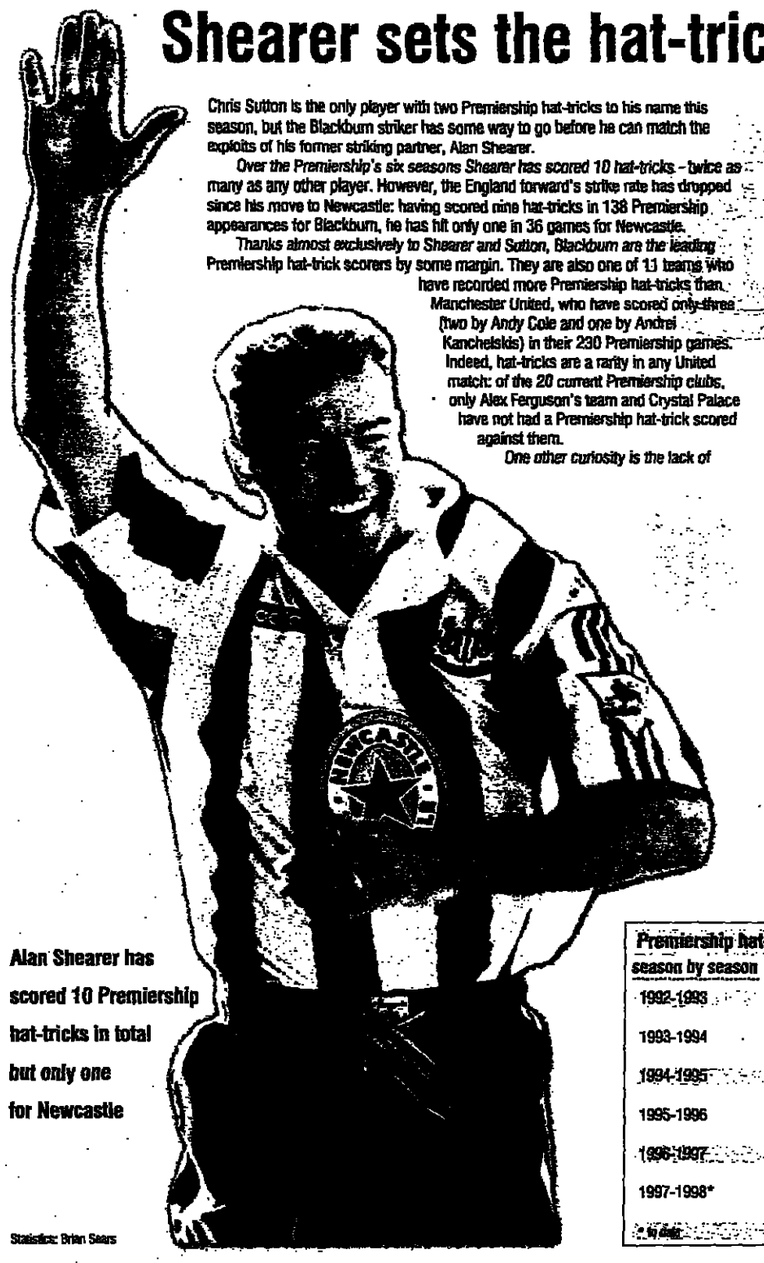
"I was standing next to Teddy after the game at United and I thought: 'I will be cheering you on in the World Cup'. It'll be the same on Sunday when I come up against Shearer. It's been a real eye-opener, but it's brilliant, especially when you consider that up until recently I was in the reserves."

Eye-opener might not have been the most tactful phrase in view of the opponents. Getting away from it all in Dublin probably seemed like a good idea until Keith Gillespie hurt his head in circumstances that still have not been properly explained. The Northern Ireland winger will play tomorrow, complete with stitches in his mysterious wound.

If Gillespie has a headache, then so has the West Ham manager, Harry Redknapp. He may be forced to employ a five-man midfield at Arsenal tomorrow as John Hartson is suspended, Paul Kitson is injured and Trevor Sinclair is Cup-tied. The Upton Park cult figure Samassi Abou is likely to lead a one-man attack.

...And statistics

Shearer sets the hat-trick target



Alan Shearer has scored 10 Premiership hat-tricks in total but only one for Newcastle

Statistics: Brian Sears

Chris Sutton is the only player with two Premiership hat-tricks to his name this season, but the Blackburn striker has some way to go before he can match the exploits of his former striking partner, Alan Shearer.

Over the Premiership's six seasons Shearer has scored 10 hat-tricks – twice as many as any other player. However, the England forward's strike rate has dropped since his move to Newcastle: having scored nine hat-tricks in 138 Premiership appearances for Blackburn, he has hit only one in 36 games for Newcastle.

Thanks almost exclusively to Shearer and Sutton, Blackburn are the leading Premiership hat-trick scorers by some margin. They are also one of 11 teams who have recorded more Premiership hat-tricks than Manchester United, who have scored only three (two by Andy Cole and one by Andrei Kanchelskis) in their 230 Premiership games. Indeed, hat-tricks are a rarity in any United match: of the 20 current Premiership clubs, only Alex Ferguson's team and Crystal Palace have not had a Premiership hat-trick scored against them.

One other curiosity is the lack of treble-scoring overseas players: all nine players with three or more Premiership hat-tricks to their name are English.

However, times are changing and five of this season's 13 hat-tricks have been scored by overseas players. Chelsea men account for three of them (Gianluca Vialli, Tore Andre Flo and Gianfranco Zola), while the others were scored by Dennis Bergkamp and Patrik Berger.

The British strikers who have scored hat-tricks this season are Chris Sutton (two), Dion Dublin, Ian Wright, Andy Cole, Andy Booth, Kevin Gallacher and Michael Owen.

Sutton's two trebles this season have doubled his tally of Premiership hat-tricks. His first was for Norwich in April 1993 and his second came the following season after his move to Blackburn.

Premiership scoring landmarks

Five goals in a game

4/3/95	Andy Cole (Manchester United)

Four goals in a game

25/9/93	Efan Ekoku (Norwich)
23/9/95	Robbie Fowler (Liverpool)
24/8/97	Gianluca Vialli (Chelsea)

Three goals but not three points

8/5/93	Coventry 3, Leeds 3 (Rod Wallace 3)
	Oldham 4, Southampton 3 (Le Tissier 3)
23/10/93	Leeds 3, Blackburn 3 (Shearer 3)
18/8/95	Southampton 3, (Le Tissier 3) Nottm Forest 4
4/12/95	Sheffield Wednesday 4, Coventry 3 (Dublin 3)
17/8/96	Middlesbrough 3, (Ravanelli 3) Liverpool 3
30/9/96	Newcastle 4, Aston Villa 3 (Yorke 3)
27/8/97	Leicester 3, Arsenal 3 (Bergkamp 3)
14/2/98	Sheffield Wednesday 3, Liverpool 3 (Owen 3)

Premiership hat-tricks

season by season		...player by player		...and club by club	
1992-1993	14	Alan Shearer	10	Blackburn	14
1993-1994	19	Robbie Fowler	5	Arsenal	8
		Ian Wright	5	Liverpool	8
1994-1995	18	Andy Cole	4	Leeds	6
1995-1996	16	Matt Le Tissier	4	Chelsea	5
1996-1997	12	Chris Sutton	4	Newcastle	5
1997-1998*	13	Kevin Campbell	3	Aston Villa	4
		Tony Cottee	3	Coventry	4
* to date		Les Ferdinand	3	Everton	4
				QPR	4
				Southampton	4

United avoiding fix with fixtures

By Guy Hodgson

IF Alex Ferguson was not trying to patch together a team from his long list of crocks, he might find time to study and smile at the paradox of Manchester United fitting in a Premiership fixture today.

No matter the result – and Manchester United could be 14 points clear tonight if they defeat Sheffield Wednesday at Hillsborough – they will have three fewer League fixtures to fit into their crowded season than their closest rivals Arsenal. And who was it who was most vocal in his opposition when Ferguson complained about fixture congestion last season?

Arsène Wenger, of course, and the Arsenal manager is likely to be the bitter bit as his side run headlong into a pile-up of matches. A home game against Derby has yet to be arranged and that is before any potential replay coming out of tomorrow's FA Cup tie with West Ham or any semi-final commitments.

Meanwhile, United play another match although they will hardly be at full strength. According to Ferguson, Denis Irwin, Peter Schmeichel and Gary Pallister are definitely out but David Beckham has recovered from Wednesday's European Cup match in Monaco.

That match tops the Premiership bill but today's undercard is hardly wanting either as Liverpool and Bolton require points for differing reasons at Anfield, while Southampton hope to give their far-fetched European ambitions greater credibility against Everton at The Dell.

Liverpool tend to get one black month a season and this time February is likely to be duly condemned after they gained only two points out of a possible 12 in the League and lost both Robbie Fowler and their Coca-Cola Cup place in 28 miserable days.

Tomorrow Chelsea will also attempt to revive their hopes of gaining a Champions' League place after a splendid victory in the Cup-Winners' Cup on Thursday. Aston Villa are the opponents at Stamford Bridge and they also got a good result in Spain during the week. It could come down to who is less tired.

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP: HOW THEY STAND

	Pl	Pts	GD	Home W	D	L	F	A	Away W	D	L	F	A	Form (most recent on right)	Upcoming matches
1 Man Utd	28	59	+36	11	2	1	35	6	7	3	4	22	13	LDWWW	11 Mar West Ham (A); 14 Mar Arsenal (H); 28 Mar Wimbledon (H); 4 Apr Blackburn (A)
2 Arsenal	26	48	+19	10	2	2	29	9	3	7	2	16	17	DWWWD	11 Mar Wimbledon (A); 14 Mar Man Utd (A); 28 Mar Sheff Wed (H); 31 Mar Bolton (A)
3 Blackburn	27	48	+16	9	3	2	35	18	4	6	3	14	15	WDLLW	11 Mar Leeds (A); 14 Mar Everton (A); 4 Apr Man Utd (H); 11 Apr Bolton (A)
4 Liverpool	28	47	+18	9	2	4	29	14	4	6	3	17	14	DLDDL	14 Mar Tottenham (H); 28 Mar Barnsley (A); 4 Apr Arsenal (H); 10 Apr Man Utd (A)
5 Chelsea	27	45	+22	8	2	2	22	9	6	1	8	30	21	LWLLL	11 Mar C Palace (H); 14 Mar West Ham (A); 5 Apr Derby (A); 8 Apr Leeds (A)
6 Derby	28	45	+10	10	3	1	28	8	3	3	8	16	26	WLWLW	15 Mar Leeds (H); 28 Mar Coventry (A); 5 Apr Chelsea (H); 11 Apr West Ham (A)
7 Leeds	28	42	+6	6	3	5	18	15	6	3	5	18	15	WLDLW	11 Mar Blackburn (H); 15 Mar Derby (A); 30 Mar West Ham (A); 4 Apr Barnsley (H)
8 Leicester	28	40	+6	5	7	3	16	11	5	3	5	18	17	WWDWL	14 Mar Wimbledon (A); 28 Mar Bolton (A); 4 Apr Coventry (H); 11 Apr C Palace (A)
9 West Ham	27	40	+2	9	2	1	26	8	3	2	10	12	28	LDWDD	11 Mar Man Utd (H); 14 Mar Chelsea (H); 30 Mar Leeds (H); 4 Apr Aston Villa (A)
10 Coventry	28	39	0	6	7	1	21	14	4	2	8	14	21	WWWWW	14 Mar Newcastle (A); 28 Mar Derby (H); 4 Apr Leicester (A); 11 Apr Aston Villa (H)
11 Southampton	28	37	-3	8	1	5	23	16	3	3	8	11	23	LWLWW	14 Mar Barnsley (A); 28 Mar Newcastle (H); 4 Apr Sheff Wed (A); 11 Apr Wimbledon (H)
12 Newcastle	27	34	-5	6	4	5	16	16	3	3	6	10	15	LWLDD	14 Mar Coventry (H); 28 Mar Southampton (A); 4 Apr C Palace (H); 11 Apr Arsenal (A)
13 Sheff Wed	28	34	-11	7	4	4	25	22	2	3	8	16	32	DLDWL	14 Mar Barnsley (A); 28 Mar Arsenal (A); 4 Apr Southampton (H); 11 Apr Barnsley (A)
14 Aston Villa	28	33	-9	6	3	5	19	19	3	3	8	11	20	LWLLW	14 Mar C Palace (H); 28 Mar Everton (A); 4 Apr West Ham (H); 11 Apr Coventry (A)
15 Wimbledon	26	32	-2	4	3	6	14	16	4	5	4	14	13	DDWWL	11 Mar Arsenal (H); 14 Mar Leicester (H); 28 Mar Man Utd (A); 4 Apr Bolton (H)
16 Everton	28	30	-8	5	3	5	18	18	2	6	7	14	22	DDLDD	14 Mar Blackburn (H); 28 Mar Aston Villa (H); 4 Apr Tottenham (A); 11 Apr Leeds (H)
17 Tottenham	29	30	-19	6	4	4	15	16	2	2	11	11	28	WDLWL	14 Mar Liverpool (H); 28 Mar Crystal Palace (A); 4 Apr Everton (H); 11 Apr Chelsea (A)
18 Barnsley	27	25	-39	5	3	5	16	21	2	1	11	8	40	WLDLW	14 Mar Southampton (H); 28 Mar Liverpool (H); 4 Apr Leeds (A); 11 Apr Sheff Wed (H)
19 Bolton	27	24	-20	3	8	2	11	13	1	4	9	12	30	DLDDL	14 Mar Sheff Wed (H); 28 Mar Leicester (H); 31 Mar Arsenal (H); Apr Wimbledon (A)
20 C Palace	27	23	-20	0	4	9	7	26	5	5	4	14	15	LLLLL	11 Mar Chelsea (A); 14 Mar Aston Villa (A); 28 Mar Tottenham (H); 4 Apr Newcastle (A)

TODAY

Coventry City v Sheffield United

1987 FA Cup Wins 1899, 1902, 15, 25

Coventry's veteran goalkeeper Steve Ogrizovic will be recalled after Magnus Hedman suffered a midweek ankle injury in training. Midfielder Paul Telfer has been suffering from a virus, but is expected to be fit, while Noel Whelan is hoping to overcome a knee injury. Gary McAllister would have marked his senior comeback today, but damaged a cruciate ligament in a reserve game on Wednesday and will be out until next season at least. Coventry have won their last seven consecutive Premiership matches, a club record, to go 10th in the League.

Sheffield United will be without Dean Saunders. The former Nottingham Forest and Liverpool forward is out with a hamstring injury while Roger Nilsen is still out with a calf problem. Acting manager Steve Thompson will also be missing Ian Rush, Shaun Derry and Jon Cullen, who are cup-tied. United go into today's match having lost 1-0 to fellow First Division promotion contenders last Tuesday, and knowing they must contend with the in-form striker Darren Huckerby, whom Thompson discovered as a teenager when he was the manager of Lincoln.

Leeds United v Wolverhampton Wanderers

1972 FA Cup Wins 1893, 1908, 49, 60

George Graham has five first-team regulars returning today. Lucas Radebe (African Nations Cup), Gary Kelly (bereavement), David Wetherall and Alfie Haland (suspended) and Bruno Ribeiro (groin strain) all missed Wednesday's 1-0 home win over Tottenham. However, Graham finished that game with six players aged 21 and under and must decide whether to keep faith with the young players or recall the regulars. Leeds have won only two of their last nine Premiership games. They were knocked out of the FA Cup by Portsmouth last season.

Wolves will make a late fitness check on goalkeeper Mike Stowell before today. Stowell's run of 127 consecutive senior appearances ended in midweek when he missed the 1-1 draw at Stoke with flu. Hans Segers took over to make his debut 20 months after joining the club and will again deputise if Stowell is unfit. Wolves have recalled striker Jason Roberts from a loan spell at Torquay and will include him among their substitutes, but Steve Froggatt is again out injured and Mixu Paatelainen starts a two-match ban. Don Goodman may return from injury.

TOMORROW

Arsenal v West Ham United

1930, 36, 50, 71, 79, 93 FA Cup Wins 1964, 75, 80

Arsenal manager Arsène Wenger will give a late fitness test to Dennis Bergkamp before tomorrow. The Dutchman missed the 0-0 Premiership draw between the two sides last Monday. Ray Parlour returns to the squad after injury but David Platt is out after he suffered an abdominal muscle strain. Ian Wright and Steve Bould are both still two weeks away from a return, while David Seaman has not fully recovered from a finger injury. However, the England goalkeeper is expected to be fit in time for England's next friendly on 25 March 25.

Harry Redknapp has injury worries. Tim Breacker and Paul Kitson are definitely out, while Stan Lazaridis, Ian Pearce, Steve Lomas, David Unsworth, and Rio Ferdinand have all been receiving treatment this week. John Hartson will be missing through suspension and Trevor Sinclair is cup-tied, so Redknapp's most likely option is to play Samassi Abou up front on his own. The only other recognised striker is reserve Lee Hodges, who could be on the bench. Craig Forrest (neck) has recovered and should return in place of Bernard Lama.

Newcastle United v Barnsley

1910, 24, 32, 51, 52, 55 FA Cup Wins 1912

Keith Gillespie's place in Newcastle's side tomorrow is in doubt after the events of the past week. Whether the winger, who has been the focus of much interest after receiving stitches to his head after an incident in Dublin during a mid-season break, will line up in an unchanged Magpies side is unknown. The Northern Ireland international scored both of Newcastle's goals in their drawn Premiership game at Oakwell in December. Steve Watson (ankle), Alessandro Pistone (ban) and Andy Griffin (cup-tied) are all unavailable to manager Kenny Dalglish.

Barnsley striker John Hendrie seems likely to be fit to face his old club, having limped out of the fifth-round replay with Manchester United with sprained ankle ligaments. If he plays, Hendrie will again take the place of the cup-tied Jan-Age Fjortoft, while South African international Eric Tinkler is likely to deputise for suspended Yugoslav midfielder Jovo Bosancic. Arjan de Zeeuw, who has not played since sustaining a groin strain midway through the first half of the game at Old Trafford, may make his return to the centre of defence.

Liverpool v Bolton

Owen 13 Leading scorer Last season: No fixture Blake 11

Jamie Redknapp and Dominic Matteo are expected to return from injury for Liverpool. Both have progressed well, and along with Oyvind Leonhardsen, who has recovered from a heel injury, will be in the squad. Phil Babb (hamstring) is unlikely to play. Winger Mark Kennedy, who has been recalled from a loan spell at QPR, may feature. Roy Evans has agreed to an extra month extension to Michael Thomas' loan at Middlesbrough. Brad Friedel stands by to make his Anfield debut after taking over from David James at Aston Villa last weekend.

Bolton manager Colin Todd may give teenage left-back Hasney Aljofree a first-team debut at Liverpool today. Former England youth international Aljofree is out of contract in the summer and may move, but if he makes the Bolton side he is more likely to sign a new deal and stay. Mark Fish and Scott Sellars return, the former after international duty with South Africa and the latter after serving a two-match ban. Both are expected to start although Wanderers will still be missing long-term casualties Robbie Elliott, Mike Whitlow and Gerry Taggart.

Southampton v Everton

Davies 12 Leading scorer Last season: 2-2 Ferguson 9

Southampton will be without Kevin Davies for at least a month with an aggravation of the ankle injury he sustained against Manchester United in January. Midfielder David Hughes is ruled out with two fractured ribs, but defender John Beresford makes his long-awaited home debut after his £1.5m move from Newcastle last month. Claus Lundekvam is expected to be fit after being substituted in last Saturday's 1-0 win at Leeds suffering from food poisoning. Richard Dryden and Ken Monkou, who is back after a two-match ban, contest a defensive place.

Dave Watson is expected to make his Everton return after rejecting a move to Manchester City and agreeing to sign a one-year extension to his contract. Watson will take over from Craig Short (knee injury) after being left on the bench for last weekend's goalless draw with Newcastle. Striker Nicky Barmby is also back in the squad after missing three games with a groin problem. Mitch Ward, Danny Williamson, Tony Grant and Michael Branch are all out, while Duncan Ferguson is still suspended. Slaven Bilic will return to the squad after training with Croatia.

Sheff Wed v Man United

Di Canio 12 Leading scorer Last season: 1-1 Cole 22

Sheffield Wednesday have problems in midfield, with Graham Hyde starting a two-match ban and Petter Rudi doubtful with a hamstring problem. Ron Atkinson could recall striker Andy Booth, who has recovered from a groin injury. Atkinson has also included Yugoslavian centre-back Dejan Stefanovic, fit again after hamstring and neck injuries, in the squad. Stefanovic may make his first Premiership start since December after impressive performances for Yugoslavia and Wednesday's reserves. Manchester United goalkeeper Peter Schmeichel has failed to recover from the calf and back problems suffered in the goalless European Cup draw in Monaco, so Raimond van der Gouw will make his first League start of the season. Denis Irwin (calf), Gary Pallister (back) and Ryan Giggs (hamstring) are all out, but David Beckham (calf) has recovered and will play, while striker Ole Gunnar Solskjaer is ready to return for his first start in a month. The champions will have played two and four games more than Blackburn and Arsenal respectively by tonight, but will maintain a lead of at least 11 points, and maybe extend it to 14.

TOMORROW

Chelsea v Aston Villa

Vialli 15 Leading scorer Last season: 1-1 Yorke 9

Chelsea striker Mark Hughes starts a two-match ban, so player-manager Gianluca Vialli is likely to recall himself up front to partner Tore Andre Flo tomorrow. Left-back Graeme Le Saux is a major doubt with an ankle injury, but defenders Frank Sinclair and Steve Clarke should be available after suffering minor knocks in the 2-1 win over Real Betis. Andy Myers should also be available after being allowed to miss the trip to Real Betis because his pregnant girlfriend's baby is overdue. Chelsea have won just one Premiership match in their last five and lost the other four, leaving them 14 points from the top.

Defender Steve Staunton is standing by for a return to the Aston Villa starting line-up in place of Riccardo Scimeca, who has a leg injury. Staunton made after impressive comeback as a substitute against Atletico Madrid on Tuesday night. Villa will also check on the fitness of strikers Stan Collymore (ankle) and Savo Milosevic (knee) before the game. Villa's poor recent Premiership form saw them drop into the bottom six, but they will be looking to build on last Saturday's 2-1 defeat of Liverpool.

TS2

SPORT

Saturday 7 March 1998

England men told to ignore 'threat'

Rugby Union

By Chris Hewett

ENGLAND'S mutinous Premiership clubs took a deep breath, pressed the pause button and postponed an outright declaration of rugby revolution yesterday, but the whiff of sedition still hung heavy over Fran Cotton, Clive Woodward and the rest of the Twickenham establishment. Unless a startling diplomatic initiative gathers momentum over the weekend – and diplomats are thin on the ground in the domestic game these days – the balloon will go up sooner rather than later.

The club owners met under the auspices of their umbrella organisation, English First Division Rugby, in London yesterday to discuss the ramifications of Northampton's decision to bar their Test contingent from joining this summer's England tour of the southern hemisphere and Woodward's subsequent address to his squad, which was based squarely on the "sign up or get lost" principle. After three hours of talks, the delegates emerged with a blast of righteous anger, a raft of veiled threats and a demand that the national coach withdraw his "unnecessary and provocative" ultimatum.

Woodward told the England players that failure to declare themselves available for the four-Test trip to Australia, New Zealand and South Africa in June and July would compromise their chances of appearing in the forthcoming Five Nations' matches with Scotland and Ireland. If his words angered some of the more militant members of his squad, they rendered the clubs apoplectic. Yesterday, they took up the cudgels with a vengeance.

"We will be advising our players not to respond to this threat," said the clubs in an EFDR statement. "We fully support the action taken by Northampton whereby their players will not be touring this summer, but instead will enjoy a two-month rest at the end of the season. While we confirm our ongoing support for international rugby and our intention to continue honouring all international release periods for the current Five Nations tournament, we also agree that, in the interests of the players' welfare, the Rugby Football Union should reconsider the southern hemisphere tour. The clubs are consulting with their players to explain their decision not to support any tour this summer."

Donald Kerr, chairman of EFDR, stressed that because of contractual small print, most clubs were not in a position to force their players to abandon the tour. Only Northampton and Saracens have the final call on their employees, and while Saints have made their position clear, Nigel Wray, the Saracens owner, has decided against pulling rank. However, Keith Barwell, Northampton's owner, appears to have obtained the support of his boardroom colleagues.

"More than anything, we are concerned about the welfare of all players, and with the demands placed on internationals," said Doug Ash, the EFDR chief executive. "A number of players require operations this summer and we know that Fran and Clive feel that they have inherited a tour that is basically a tour too many. We believe a summer's rest to be the best preparation for England players endeavouring to win the World Cup in 1999."

Woodward has acknowledged that the summer schedule, which not only features two Tests with the All Blacks but also games against the New Zealand Maoris and New Zealand A, is far from ideal. "Had I been England coach when the itinerary was being put together, it would have looked a whole lot different," he agreed earlier in the week.

On the face of it, then, there is room for manoeuvre, especially as Kerr hinted last night that his organisation would be happy to accept a two-Test programme. The two sides are so entrenched after months of mutual mistrust and political shadow boxing that it is inconceivable that the RFU will approach the southern hemisphere unions and request a more player-friendly schedule.

Telfer sees the light, page 17



Michael Schumacher on his way to setting the fastest time in Melbourne yesterday on the first day of practice for tomorrow's Australian Grand Prix, the first race of the new Formula One season. Leading teams spent much of the day arguing over the interpretation of new regulations

Schumacher's challenge, page 16; Photograph: Steve Holland/AP

Battles still to be won in football's war against racism



Racist comments on the pitch are much rarer these days but, says Charlton striker **Mark Bright**, the problem has not been eradicated

WHEN Crystal Palace played Swindon Town in the Second Division play-offs in 1989 at the County Ground one of their players called Ian Wright and myself a "pair of niggers" and "black bastards".

We were so incensed that we waited for the player in the tunnel at the end of the game, then asked him to repeat his slur. On his own he didn't do so, but once surrounded by his team-mates he felt brave enough to use the words again and needless to say all parties had to be dragged off to their separate changing-rooms.

Steve Coppell, the Palace manager, told us the best possible answer was to make him eat his words in the second leg a few days later and we did. Wrighty and I scored a goal each as we beat Swindon 2-0 at Selhurst Park, and we went on to gain promotion to the old First Division by beating Blackburn in the play-off final.

The issue of fellow professionals racially abusing one another has resurfaced again this week, following Stan Collymore's accusation that he was called a "coon" by Liverpool's Steve Harkness during the game at Villa Park last Saturday, an allegation that Harkness denies. I spoke to Stan this week and he said: "We are now only two years away from the millennium and this sort of thing is still on the agenda. It's now time to eradicate this and tackle it head on."

It seems incredible to me that, with all his recent problems, Stan would go to the extremes of reporting his feelings to the match referee during the game, and to the Liverpool management and his own club chairman after the game, if nothing untoward had happened.

The days have gone where black players are prepared to put up with these remarks just because it isn't the done thing to complain. But it hasn't always been like that.

From my schoolboy football, 20 years ago, through to my non-League days at Leek Town, racial abuse was always part of the package. "Black bastard", "nigger", "wog", "coon" – I've heard them all at some stage. While playing for Leicester City in the early Eighties I had to endure racial barracking from a section of my own fans. It reached the stage when I didn't want my brother and sisters to come to the games because I didn't want them to have to sit and listen to the abuse.

During the early stages of my career I had to endure it because I was in the minority and it wasn't the done thing to kick up a fuss or go to the newspapers. Other pros told me it was part of the game.

Well, it certainly isn't part of the game any more. Indeed I can't remember the last time I was racially abused on the field.

I think one of the key developments in this process was the emergence of genuine black superstars, and one of the most significant moments was when Liverpool bought John Barnes from Watford in 1987. Liverpool as a city had a reputation for being resistant towards black players so in signing Barnes they now had an opportunity to have a role model within their ranks for aspiring black youngsters in the city to look up to.

Barnes was a resounding success during his decade at Anfield with his intelligent play on the field and his articulate manner off it. He did more than just play for Liverpool, he helped to break down racial barriers within the city. His success at Anfield was more than just success on the park. His achievement was probably a bigger step forward for black players than most people realised at the time.

Barnes was superseded by Ian Wright as the highest profile black footballer in the Premiership and he continued the trend of breaking down barriers. Ian is one of those people who's transcended football. Some people forget he's black: he's what you might call "Street", both black and white people can relate to him.

The success of Barnes, Wright, Ferdinand and the other outstanding black footballers changed players' mentalities. For example, an Arsenal player is less likely to abuse an opponent racially when arguably the best player on his own team is black. That goes for players at other clubs as well.

Some may say that black players are too sensitive about being racially abused, that Paul Gascoigne is often referred to as "fatty" while others are called "baldy", or "spotty" or whatever. Banter or verbal intimidation among professionals is rife and I have no objection to that – players must gain a psychological advantage wherever possible. But there's something very different and unacceptable about being called a "nigger" as opposed to "fatty", "skinny" or "baldy". To me the distinction is self-evident.

Football has come a long way in eradicating racism, but at times like these it seems apparent that there is still a lot of work to be done.

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3522. Saturday 7 March — By Mass

ACROSS

1 Fish round lake causing ripple (6)
4 Very good among experts – the tops (6)
10 Occasion for smooth talk? (5,10)
11 To excel, climb face of Everest (5)
12 Captivated, made one ecstatic about old city (9)
13 Petrified by a hag, turned to stone (6)
15 Fire in shed (6)
16 First of combinations activates Rooks? (6)
18 Artist's into drug (toxicant) (6)
21 Pressure calls for spirit – a case! (9)
22 About to cover with carpet (5)
23 SELUR? (7,3,5)
24 Island of note: interior's a sensation (6)
25 Actor in Paramount's first film (6)

DOWN

1 Board's concerned with background (6)
2 Taken short? (7,3,5)
3 Thread of story reinforced by Sunday league (5)
5 This one'll do (9)
6 Debate-wise deliveries imbuing Tory in call for change (15)
7 Unbroken fast (6)
8 Word about pieces for stage (6)
9 Sounds like a fine romance (6)
14 Chief among rebellious antis? (9)
17 Music with energy and beat (6)
18 Diffident about Northern church, he's not one for the services (6)
19 Morsel a bird pecked (6)
20 Tricky problem, snag, engrossing bridge players (6)
22 Salmon in river concealed by rock (5)

Friday's solution

T	E	T	R	A	H	E	D	R	A		A	M	P	S
H		A		L		Y		E		J		I		E
R	E	S	O	L	V	E		Q	U	O	N	O	A	M
O		M		I		L		U		B		G		A
B	R	A	I	N	W	A	V	E		S	L	E	E	P
		N		W		S		S		F				H
L	O	S	E	R		H	O	T	P	O	T	A	T	O
U		E		E				R		N		R		
S	T	R	A	S	S	B	A	N	D		T	E	A	S	E
R				Y		D		I		H		L		
I	M	P	E	L		M	E	S	S	E	N	G	E	R
C		U		I		T		U		B		E		O
A	L	M	O	N	E	R		S	P	O	U	S	E	S
N		P		G		A		E		Y		I		I
T	O	S	H		C	L	Y	D	E	S	D	A	L	E

Last Saturday's solution

F	O	L	I	C	A	C	I	D		A	S	S	E	T
R		O		A		H		I		C		T		R
A	N	G	E	L		O	A	S	T	H	O	U	S	E
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C		R		N		H		S		N		E		A
E	C	L	A	T		O	V	E	R	T	H	R	O	W

The first five correct solutions to this week's puzzle opened next Thursday receive hardbacked copies of the Oxford Dictionary of Quotations. Answers and winners' names will be published next Saturday. Send solutions to Saturday Crossword, P. O. Box 4018, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL. Please use the box number and postcode and give your own postcode. Last week's winners: A Burton, Stevenage; C Tittle, Nottingham; J Dunlop, Bath; R Warren, Cuffley; D Worley, Rickmansworth.

Klinsmann put in his place by Gross

Football

THE HONEYMOON has proved to be a short one for Jürgen Klinsmann and Christian Gross, with the German international deciding that the end of the season will see him untie the knot with Tottenham.

"I will give my best until the end of the season and then we will go different directions," said Klinsmann, whose differences with the Spurs coach came to a head in the White Hart Lane tunnel after last Sunday's 1-0 win over Bolton.

"Christian and I obviously have totally different opinions about things. But I just don't want any more of this stuff going on, because we have enough problems with the relegation battle.

"At the end of the day, he is the manager and I respect that even if I do have different ideas. I have tried to give my input, but reached a certain point last week when our ideas differed."

The dispute was over Klinsmann's disagreement with the role of David Ginola in the team. Despite the argument, an uneasy truce was called and Klinsmann played in the 1-0 defeat at Leeds on Wednesday.

Gross asserted his authority by telling the striker that he was a squad member and had to accept "my decisions about who I play and where I play them". According to Gross, Klinsmann was the only player unhappy with what was a vital result because he did not agree with where the coach had decided to play certain players and, in particular, Ginola.

"I could not understand his reaction," Gross said. "We still have nine crucial games until the end of the season and I need a very positive attitude from him to help the team. When Jürgen rejoined us, it was very clear that he was coming here for six months to help us out of our problems and it is that help that we and all our fans now need. This is vital in our fight against relegation."

When Klinsmann returned to the club in December for his second spell, he was heralded as the man to inspire a Spurs revival. But he has scored only one goal in seven games and has been affected by a lack of service which has brought the team only 26 goals in 29 Premiership matches.

This is not the first time during his brief spell in charge that Gross has come into conflict with a senior player. Les Ferdinand spoke out after he was forced to train despite being injured.

Football, pages 20-23

Collymore stands by claims

STAN COLLYMORE stood by his claims yesterday that he had been racially abused by Liverpool's Steve Harkness – but must now decide whether to formally complain to the Football Association or to let the matter rest.

Villa's £7m record signing made the allegations after the Premiership game at Villa Park last Saturday, although his version of events was vehemently denied by Harkness.

"I hear what Steve Harkness has to say and I still maintain my own position and stand by what I said," Collymore said after after a meeting with his agent and the Villa manager, John Gregory. Villa will also continue to back Collymore and their statement yesterday stressed that the club "wish to reiterate their stance in fully supporting him in this matter".

"We have decided to make a statement which says everything and I don't want to discuss it any more because this is a very serious predicament at the moment," Gregory said. "It's a very sensitive issue."

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PERSONAL FINANCE NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

YOUR MONEY

Personal finance, property & motoring

Saturday 7 March 1998

Another bite of the windfall apple

Shareholders may have profited by the new banks but customers are leaving in droves. By **Andrew Verity**



Illustration by Jonathan Anstee

Sometimes, missing an opportunity to make money can prove more expensive than losing it. For people who sold windfall shares early, this has become painfully obvious over the last two weeks.

A member of Halifax who sold 200 windfall shares when the society was converted in June could could have made as little as £1,460. A tidy profit perhaps.

But someone who hung on to the shares until now might be forgiven for feeling a little smug. Sold now, 200 windfall shares would be worth no less than £1,840. Early sellers have avoided the risk of a crash in the stock market. But that safety has cost them about £400 each.

In the same way, a member of Woolwich who sold 200 windfall shares in July when the society floated would have got around £560. But now the same shares are worth £736. Early sellers have, in effect, paid a 24 per cent fee for their haste.

To cap it all, those people who hung on to their shares are now being offered a second bite at the windfall apple. More than a year after the latest spate of flotations began, the building societies are boasting fat profits – Halifax made £1.6bn before tax – and giant cash surpluses.

How are they spending the extra dosh (if you're a shareholder, this is your property)? Woolwich has made itself popular by seeking approval for a £300m programme to return capital to shareholders. It is paying a special dividend this year of 6.5p. Add this to the normal dividend of 9.5p and the average windfall holder has got over £100 in dividends alone.

Halifax was given a cooler reception for its plans to use some of its £4bn cash pile. No special dividends will be paid upfront – though there was an ordinary one of 17.5p a share. But it has pledged to use £1bn to buy shares back from shareholders by being "in and out of the market" over the next year.

The buy-back will mean there are fewer shares, so future dividends will be spread less thinly. But smaller shareholders have expressed annoyance: why no special dividend? Four million retail shareholders, holding two-thirds of the shares, have little chance of jumping into the market and selling just as Halifax is buying. Institutional investors have a better chance.

City analysts are now wondering aloud whether Halifax, quite literally, has more money than it knows what to do with. As the bank announced its results last week, its chairman Jon Foulds made it clear that buying another bank or insurance company was highly unlikely because prices were too high: it is not only Halifax whose shares have soared in the last year.

Meanwhile, the long-term prospects for the "PLCs" (converted societies) have taken a turn for the worse. Customers have been abandoning the newly converted building societies in huge numbers.

Halifax last week announced that its share of the mortgage market, measured in net lending, shrank from 11 per cent to 6 per cent. Whereas £2.3bn flowed into its accounts in 1996, £615m flowed out in 1997. Alliance & Leicester saw its net lending shrink by 20 per cent to £400m. Woolwich also saw its net lending slip sharply.

The PLCs say this is the "carpetbagging effect" in action. Older borrowers had kept small mortgages running as the windfall approached and had since redeemed them. But shouldn't shareholders still be worried? Halifax's share of the market has slipped to a third of its normal size.

After the windfall feast of last year, all the converted building societies are looking distinctly hungover. Savers, too, are abandoning them. New savings banks – such as Tesco, Standard Life and Virgin – have enticed hundreds of millions of pounds away from the poorer rates at the former societies.

Societies which stuck with their mutual status have profited handsomely as both savers and borrowers have flocked to them. Both Bradford & Bingley and Nationwide have seen record levels of new business. Even Coventry, a much smaller society, has seen its net mortgage lending more than double.

Building societies which have stayed mutual say this proves that the banks have become complacent. They pan the second windfalls as just another example of short-term greed, not long-term wisdom. They point out that the true value of the windfall is small compared with the value of a low mortgage rate over time.

The Building Societies Association claims the PLCs are pushing themselves into a corner. While shareholders are being treated, it claims, customers are being soaked.

The point is illustrated by looking at the profit margins being taken. Where did much of Halifax's £1.6bn profits come from? Both building societies and banks take their profits from customers by using the gap between lending and saving rates – known as the "net interest margin". The table shows the profits taken by the PLCs against the profits taken by the mutuals. The PLCs are in some cases taking twice as much from their customers as the mutuals.

The converted societies say the mutuals will never sustain this competitive edge. They claim that in a few years, saving rates will have to drop while mortgage rates will rise. The PLCs will fight back, with Halifax boosting spending on incentives for borrowers by at least 20 per cent.

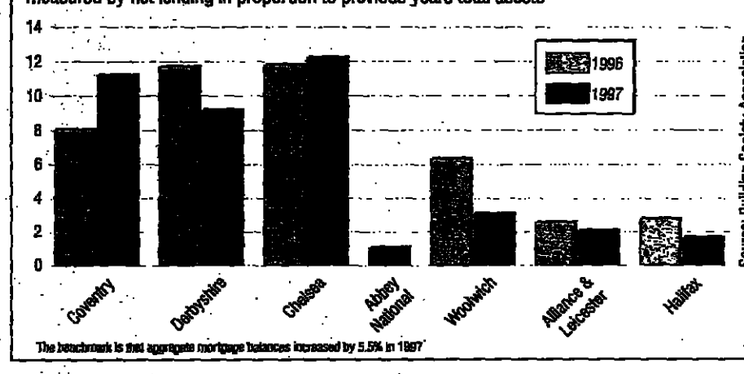
But it has now become clear that shareholders who stuck with converted societies are generally happy with their lot – and remarkably loyal. Customers, on the other hand, have flocked away.

The gap between saving and borrowing rates	
Mutuals	
Bradford & Bingley	1.22%
Coventry	1.20%
Skipton	1.58%
Leeds & Holbeck	1.55%
Chelsea	1.65%
PLCs	
Halifax	2.18%
Woolwich	2.03%
Northern Rock	1.88%
Abbey National	1.68%

Source: Building Societies Association

How the building societies have done

measured by net lending in proportion to previous years total assets



The benchmark is that aggregate mortgage balances increased by 5.5% in 1997

Source: Building Society Association

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The Deeds of Diana

Princess Diana's executors could be the last to use an old-fashioned method of distributing her fortune which minimises tax – and which Gordon Brown wants to abolish. The Chancellor is widely expected to outlaw Deeds of Variation, a technique which allows executors to use up any unused tax exemptions, in the Budget on 17 March. If it goes ahead, the move will be seen as a renewed attempt at a reform attempted by the Conservative government in the late 1980s. The attempt to outlaw the tax avoidance method was dropped after a public outcry.

The Miras touch

From 6 April, the rate of mortgage interest tax relief (Miras) will be worth just 10 per cent, down from 15 per cent last year. It is a far cry from the 40 per cent rate which could be had when a former chancellor, Nigel Lawson, triggered the Miras-fuelled housing boom. We say an early farewell to the beast.
Page 5

Commercial country

Commercial Union has teamed up with the National Trust in an effort to tap into the strength of feeling on countryside issues. Buyers of household and motor insurance can ask CU to donate 10 per cent of the price of each policy sold to the Trust's conservation work.

Britannia's bargain

Britannia Building Society this week launched a market-leading mortgage that fixes rates for four years at 5.99 per cent, including 12 months' free unemployment cover and a small cash bonus every year. The rate rises to 6.69 per cent on loans worth more than 75 per cent of the value of the home.

INSIDE

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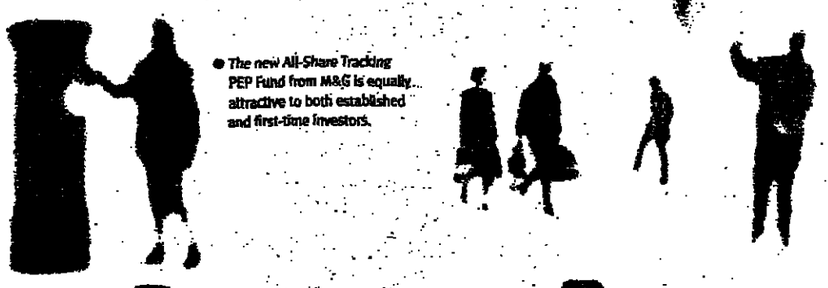
Spotlight: Dresdner RCM's Investment Trust PEPs

The Products: Dresdner RCM's Investment Trust PEPs.
The Deal: Dresdner RCM Global Investors is slashing its initial charge from 3.5 per cent to zero. As with all personal equity plans (PEPs), up to £6,000 can be invested. Up to £1,500 can go into assets invested outside the UK. Investors who put money in before 5 April, the start of the new financial year, can harness the tax-sheltered PEP twice over: up to £6,000 more can be invested between April this year and next.
Plus points: The decision to slash the initial charge gives investors a rare opportunity to tap into some useful investment expertise without fussing too much about cost. Some of the investment trusts run by the company have seen dazzling performances: the Kleinwort Charter Investment Trust turned £6,000 into £15,542 between in just five year, between 31 December 1992 and 31 December 1997. The range of funds is impressive: investors who believe the UK stock market is peaking can instead put the money into equities and bonds across Europe.

Other charges are also low. This investment expertise will cost just 1 per cent a year (plus VAT) – compared with 50 per cent more for some rivals.
Drawbacks and risks: Until 17 March, it is not quite clear – with any PEP - what the rules on tax relief for PEPs will be. The likelihood is that growth will still fetch 10 per cent tax relief for the next 10 years. Then it may go to zero. Investment trusts perform best as a long-term investment – so don't count on the tax reliefs.
Verdict: An inexpensive and valuable opportunity – if the right fund is picked.
Marks out of five: Four

In the July Budget, the Chancellor announced that tax exempt savings schemes will change in April 1999. As a result you may not be able to continue to enjoy the current tax benefits offered by a PEP. However, the Government has announced that a new tax privileged vehicle is to be introduced – the Individual Savings Account, or ISA for short. Full details have yet to be confirmed and we are currently in discussion with the Government as to the future implications for PEPs. The value to you of the tax benefits will depend on your own circumstances. Past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance. The price of investments and the income from them can go down as well as up, you may not get back as much as you invest. M&G do not offer investment advice or make any recommendations regarding investments - we only promote the packaged products and services of the M&G marketing group.
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ANDREW VERITY

Could Halifax sell you a tomato?

Mike Blackburn, the chief executive of Halifax, was asked last week if he was worried that customers would slip away from the society now they had lost the prospect of "free" windfall shares.

The question was a fair one. Since converting to a bank, Halifax has seen its share of the mortgage market (measured as net lending) shrink to just 6 per cent. It is normally around 16 per cent. Its mortgage rates are expensive compared to mutual societies – many of which have reported record business even as Halifax reported record lows.

Mr Blackburn's reply went something like this: "Tomatoes are cheaper in a Halifax market than they are in Marks & Spencer. But people still go to Marks & Spencer."

His chum on the board, Nigel Colne, who recently retired as a director of M&S, must have been pleased. But what does this say about Halifax's attitude to its customers?

Mr Blackburn appears to have meant that people would go to the Halifax for a mortgage because its products were high quality. Cheap rates, he appears to think, don't matter so much.

Really, Mr Blackburn. Is that the way it works? Just how high can you raise the price of a tomato before the customer balks and goes down town?

Mr Blackburn's tomatoes – sorry, mortgages – are pretty dear. A variable rate mortgage with Halifax now costs 8.7 per cent a year. At its mutual rival, Nationwide, it is 8.1 per cent. Because of that gap, a customer with a £50,000 mortgage would pay roughly £3,000 extra over 10 years.

Meanwhile, Halifax savings accounts are hardly a cheap bunch of bananas. While some new banks are offering instant access accounts at 6.7 per cent, Halifax hardly goes near this – even when you tie your money up.

Compared to its mutual peers, Halifax is taking unreasonable profits from its customers. Both building societies and banks take a substantial chunk of their profits from the gap between savings and loan rates – the "net interest margin". Halifax's gap on retail operations is 2.48 per cent. At Coventry, the mutual, it's less than half that, 1.20 per cent.

So far, some 4 million shareholders have kept their Halifax shares. Many got a windfall worth over £1,500 each. With the prospect of £1bn to be spent on a share buy-back (see page 1), they can rely on getting "a little extra help". Customers, on the other hand, have ended up with squashed tomatoes.

Ethical investments are booming, according to a recent report. Co-Operative Insurance says some £1,250m was invested in 21 ethical unit trusts as of last month, up more than £50m in just a month. The myth is that they don't give as good returns as the less scrupulous kind – but this is City propaganda. Unfortunately, there is nothing to stop them investing in the Halifax.

The Independent's free Guide to Ethical Finances, written by Nic Cicutti and sponsored by Friends Provident, can be obtained by calling 0800 21 44 87. Or fill in the coupon on page 4.

Skip the rent and boost the pension

THE MAKEOVER

Name: Gordon Rae

Occupation: Marketing and business consultant

The problem: How to buy a home, save money and boost a pension – all at the same time.

The advice: Gordon is advised to move from renting to a special kind of mortgage with fixed payments. By utilising his savings, he can keep over £400 a month, which will help the pension.



Age concern: At 57, repaying a mortgage before he retires could strain Gordon Rae's finances
Photograph: Emma Boam

Gordon, who is divorced with no dependants, has two big problems to solve: his home and his pension. He is paying £750 a month to live in rented accommodation – which concerns him.

Second, he earns over £35,000 a year and has saved £122,000 through an old-style personal pension. But, at 57, he knows he needs to boost this fund to have anything like a decent retirement income. Can he kill two financial birds with one stone?

The Adviser: David A Holland, managing director of RK Harrison Financial Planning, a long-established firm of independent financial advisers with offices in London, Bedford, Salisbury, Exeter, Banbury and Scotland. Telephone: 01234 305555.

The Advice:

A special kind of mortgage

Gordon is renting a property in central London which is costing about £750 per calendar month. At 57, repaying a mortgage before he retires will put a severe strain on his finances.

Being self-employed with only 18 months' accounts would normally bar him from many lending opportunities, but the Shared Appreciation Mortgage (SAM) from Bank of Scotland answers many of Gordon's problems.

He can fix the interest rate for the life of the mortgage, which can be repaid on death by the sale of the property. In return for a very preferential interest rate, the borrower shares a percentage of the future increase in the value of the home. In effect, this subsidises the low interest rate.

For example, if the maximum loan of 75 per cent is taken on a flat costing £85,000, the loan would be £63,750 – requiring a deposit of £21,250.

The value of the loan determines the lender's cut. In this case, any future appreciation in the value of the property would be shared 75 per cent to the lender, 25 per cent to the borrower.

The current interest rate under the Bank of Scotland's SAM is 5.99 per cent (APR 9 per cent).

The saving

The gross monthly repayments (interest-only) for a loan of £63,750 would be £318.22 per month. Allowing for tax relief at 10 per cent on £30,000 of the loan (appropriate after 6 April) it would be £303.25. This would save Gordon some £446.75 a month.

The mortgage would take up a large portion of Gordon's savings. However, he does have a Legal & General endowment policy, held jointly with his ex-wife, due to pay out £28,000 on maturity in 2006. The intention is to split the proceeds 50/50 between him and his wife either on death or maturity.

A better pension

Gordon is well aware that his personal pension will not provide an adequate income in retirement. With potential income released from property purchase, he can afford to put £1,000 a month into his pension.

Based on realistic assumptions (fund growth of 8 per cent and salary growth of 5 per cent with contributions linked to rising salary) and assuming he retires at 70, we have projected he would have a cash sum available of £678,470. He can take around £170,000 as tax-free cash, leaving about £508,000 to purchase a pension. This will provide £53,444 per annum, increasing in line with the retail price index.

This represents approximately 75:5 per cent of his projected earnings just prior to retirement. This should give him a comfortable retirement or even allow him to retire before 70 and maintain a reasonable standard of living.

His NPI contract is a traditional with-profit policy and investment performance with these policies has been very good in the past. However, based on a recent survey, NPI ranks 17th out of 21 companies for policies maturing after 20 years, the yield excluding terminal bonus being 10.62 per cent pa, with terminal bonus 14.27 per cent pa.

These returns may seem extremely good, but they reflect historic returns where inflation has been much higher. Most with-profit bonus rates have fallen dramatically in the past few years and future returns are unlikely to be as good as in the past. Also, with-profit contracts, with modern day technology, represent a very crude way of managing risk; it should be noted that of NPI's total payout over 20 years, 52 per cent is represented by the terminal bonus, which does not attach until retirement. Some would say you couldn't get a riskier investment than this!

I would recommend Gordon finds a good IFA and explores switching to another pension. His attitude to risk is commensurate with a managed pension fund; I would advocate a Lifestyle Fund, where the equity exposure gradually diminishes as he nears retirement.

UNDERSTANDING THE STOCK MARKET: JOHN ANDREW

Club together for some profitable lessons

"It's a hobby that will bring you fun, friends, excitement, hours of pleasure and a wider understanding of shares," says Gill Nott, the chief executive of ProShare. The pastime is participating in an investment club.

An investment club is a group of people who meet regularly and pool together some cash to invest, primarily in the stock market. There are 1,800 clubs in the UK with an estimated 30,000+ members. The most successful club of 1997 made a 100 per cent gain on their original investment in just 12 months. However, not all have such success. The Quayside Ladies from Liverpool have won awards for the way they ran their club – having fun while learning about the stock market. But, in the process, they lost 10 per cent of their subscriptions.

Experience shows that it is best to start a club among your own friends. It is important to limit the monthly subscriptions to an affordable amount, typically £25-£30. Ground rules must be established from the beginning. Thankfully, help is at hand in the form of the ProShare Investment Club Manual. It is a complete guide to starting and running an investment club.

Legally, most UK investment clubs are organised as partnerships. This eliminates the potential problems of corporation tax. To qualify for the "Simplified Scheme", a club must satisfy five conditions: the club shall have no more than 20 members at any one time; subscriptions must not exceed £1,000 per member each year; the total net gains of the club most not exceed £5,000 in a year; the average investment per head based on cost price may not exceed £5,000; all members are to agree every year as to the apportionment of capital gains liability.

When the Revenue has agreed a club qualifies they will issue forms 185-2, one for each member. At the end of the year, the club treasurer should apportion the club's capital gains/losses and dividends/tax credits among the members in accordance with the club's rules.

The attraction is that everyone, whether regular investors or newcomers, will have something to contribute to the discussion of a potential share purchase.

Special Offer

'The Independent' has agreed a discount for ProShare's Investment Club Manual. Copies are available for £18 as opposed to £25. To order, call 0171-394 5200 with your credit card details and mention this article.

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Direct Line	Instant Savings	5.80%	7.00%	7.05%	7.15%	7.25%
Woolwich	Postal 60	6.75%	7.15%	7.35%	7.55%	7.75%

Source: Moneyfacts. Bonus Postal Account rates are quoted gross C.A.R. and include a unique 2% gross C.A.R. bonus. All other rates quoted gross p.a. All financial information is checked for accuracy on a weekly basis.

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ROBIN AMLÔT
INTERNET INVESTOR

Trading places on the Net

Datastream/ICV's Market-Eye internet service appears to be living up to its initial promise with the development of its "Trading Floor", created to provide links to a range of broking services. The ultimate aim is to allow you to click on a share price and go straight to your dealer to complete a trade.

The first two brokers to set up shop with Datastream/ICV are James Brearley & Sons of Blackpool and Edinburgh-based Torrie & Co. By coincidence, both firms have been in the stockbroking business since 1919.

James Brearley & Sons' Internet Dealing Service (IDS) is an execution-only facility. The IDS commission scale is 1 per cent, with a minimum of £20 and a maximum of £50 per deal. Users receive, by e-mail, Brearley's regular "Investment Review" and also have access to other information, including the broker's current buy-list, on its web pages.

FasTrade is the execution-only stockbroking service from Torrie & Co, the only independent stockbroking partnership in Scotland. Torrie & Co's main site offers information on the firm's other services. FasTrade is specifically an internet dealing service. Commission rates for UK shares, government stocks and corporate bonds are set at 0.5 per cent, with a minimum charge of £15 and a maximum charge of £50.

Torrie charges more for trading in overseas securities – 1.8 per cent of the value of the deal with a minimum charge of £30. There is also an "account charge" of £2.50/stock per half year. However, if you trade more than 10 times in any one year this charge is waived.

As you would expect, a custody service and a high-interest bank account are offered by both brokers. The firms accept trading orders via secure e-mail, authenticated by the PIN they give you once you have registered, and promise to "action your dealing instructions as soon as reasonably practicable at the best price available".

You may place orders with or without price limits. However, given the current volatile nature of share prices – and the fluctuations in prices which occur at the start and close of business – limits might be wise. Both firms accept limit orders for the day they receive them, but the order will lapse if not fulfilled by the close of trading at 4.30pm.

Both services require you to have cleared funds in the high-interest account, which they expect you to set up before making any purchases. If you are selling, the brokers will not proceed with the sale unless they have possession of the shares. Any purchases made through either service will be held in a nominee account.

Datastream/ICV's Investor Service is a free service, offering delayed prices and news from a variety of source. London Stock Exchange prices are delayed by 20 minutes and Liffe prices by 15 minutes. It also offers charts and historical data from Datastream's own databases (five years closing mid-prices). The site also offers a paid-for Premium Service, which allows you to tailor a package with combination of delayed and real-time prices.

At the same time as James Brearley & Sons and Torrie & Co were hanging out their internet shingles, another broker was withdrawing from the web. CaterDeal pulled out of internet share dealing at the end of February. CaterDeal's parent, Abbey National, apparently prefers to develop a proprietary interactive service rather than upgrade CaterDeal's internet operations.

Datastream/ICV: *www.market-eye.co.uk*
James Brearley & Sons: *www.jbrearley.co.uk*
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The art of the chair man

Collect to invest: John Windsor

Danny Lane has put aside for his son and daughter 20 of the edition of 100 Etruscan chairs he designed in 1984. The first of the glass and steel constructions – regarded by many collectors as his signature piece – sold for £340. Now, with 30 of the edition yet to be made, his price is £6,500.

Lane, a 43-year-old American who settled here in 1975 and stirred trend-setters with his sculptural furniture in the late Eighties, is an inspiration to collector-investors. He carefully husbands his limited editions. Only two or three Etruscans a year are allowed out of his London workshop.

Like studio ceramics, limited-edition contemporary furniture strives to be classified as fine art but, as yet, commands only a fraction of fine art prices. Although museums are snapping it up, it has yet to earn wholehearted trust as a private investment.

But Britain's three foremost designers of sculpturally designed chairs are growing in professional – and collectable – status.

Last year, Israeli-born Ron Arad, renowned for Rover car-seat fun furniture and massive, rugged steel armchairs (and a former collaborator of Lane's), became professor of furniture at the RCA. And the Tunisian-born Tom Dixon – a former night-club promoter best known for his rod-and-rush "S" chair – was appointed head of design at Habitat UK.

Arad and Dixon's early one-offs and limited editions are maintaining their value at auction and will acquire scarcity value now that both have turned to mass-production. (Ask the auctioneer whether that Dixon "S" chair is early studio or recent production-line.)

Lane, on the other hand, has shunned mass-production and continued to tread the path of the lone artist.

He has completed such public commissions as the stairs and balustrade of the V&A's new glass gallery and a two-ton, 3.5 metre high spiralling column of glass outside the Greycoats building in Bishopsgate.

He says: "I hold to my integrity as an artist, not a designer. I don't see any difference between furniture and sculpture, except that you have to flirt with the practicalities."

The Etruscan, he readily admits, is "a totally impractical chair: I wouldn't bother to sit on it. It's not about sitting". Instead, he revels in its dialogue between steel technology and raw slabs of glass.

The art world, he observes ruefully, is still suspicious of anything relating to furniture, and the design world is still suspicious of anything that calls itself art. "So you get this very interesting marketing dilemma."

His solution is to position himself as chief collector-investor of his own designs, patiently managing supply to collectors and setting aside pieces for his family as prices rise. His edition of 50 all-glass stacking chairs started at £700-£800 in 1984. Now, with 20 of the edition still unmade, he charges £12,000.

"It's like investment in stocks," he says, "some people go for the short term, some the long term but, whatever you do, you've got to have faith in the artist or designer." That means faith in himself, of course.

By the time the last Etruscan or stacking chair leaves his workshop in 10 or 15 years time, their craftsmanship will have reached an apex of perfection. The artist in him demands that. He calls it "the easel approach". It is still Lane, rather than his craftsmen, who cuts the glass.

The Etruscan is hardly capable of further refinement. Its mild steel legs, for example, are now made from stainless steel. Before that improvement, Lane met the complaints of clients that the Etruscan's sharp-pointed legs made holes in their polished floors (could they have been actually sitting on them?) by fitting them with plastic caps designed for high-heeled shoes.

"It is only by constant fine tuning," he says, "that I am able to edition these things without getting bored."

His clientele still consists primarily of wealthy cognoscenti and museums. As for the auction houses, which launched design sales six years ago, they need him more than he needs them. They want his cutting-edge glass to add glamour to sales overstocked with mass-produced Eames and Jacobsen chairs, but their clientele is less clued-up than the enthusiasts who buy from his workshop.

A salutary example of dimwit bidding occurred last year at Christie's first sale devoted to "The Chair". Unsold at an estimated £2,000-£3,000 was an Etruscan unusual for having a carved marble seat instead of glass.

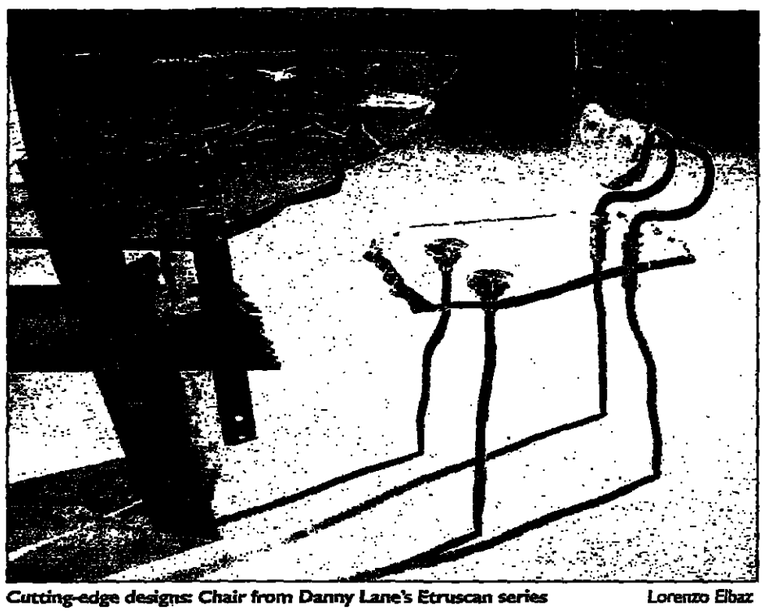
Cognoscenti should have known – and Lane would have told anybody who telephoned him – that he made only 15 marble-seats, early in the run. "I just felt like doing them. But they were fussy, not capable of an edition."

The auction catalogue lauded the chair as a "highly charged and poetic object" but offered no clue as to its rarity. Considering that Lane is now getting £6,500 for standard glass-seat versions, it would have been a snip.

Similarly, in the same sale, his favourite one-off elm, steel and glass "Greenback" chair – was specially requested by the auctioneers but left unwanted at an estimated £12,000-£18,000. Lane's response was to up his workshop price for the chair to £13,500 (plus VAT, of course).

"It's taken me about 15 years to get used to dealing with prices," he says, "but I've learned that integrity is important. If you cheapen what you make, you cheapen yourself." What is it that economists say is the basis of a strong market? Ah, yes: confidence.

Danny Lane, 19 Hythe Road, London NW10 6RT (0181-968 3399). Lane furniture is also available from Adrian Sassoon (0171-581 9888).



Cutting-edge designs: Chair from Danny Lane's Etruscan series — Lorenzo Elbaz

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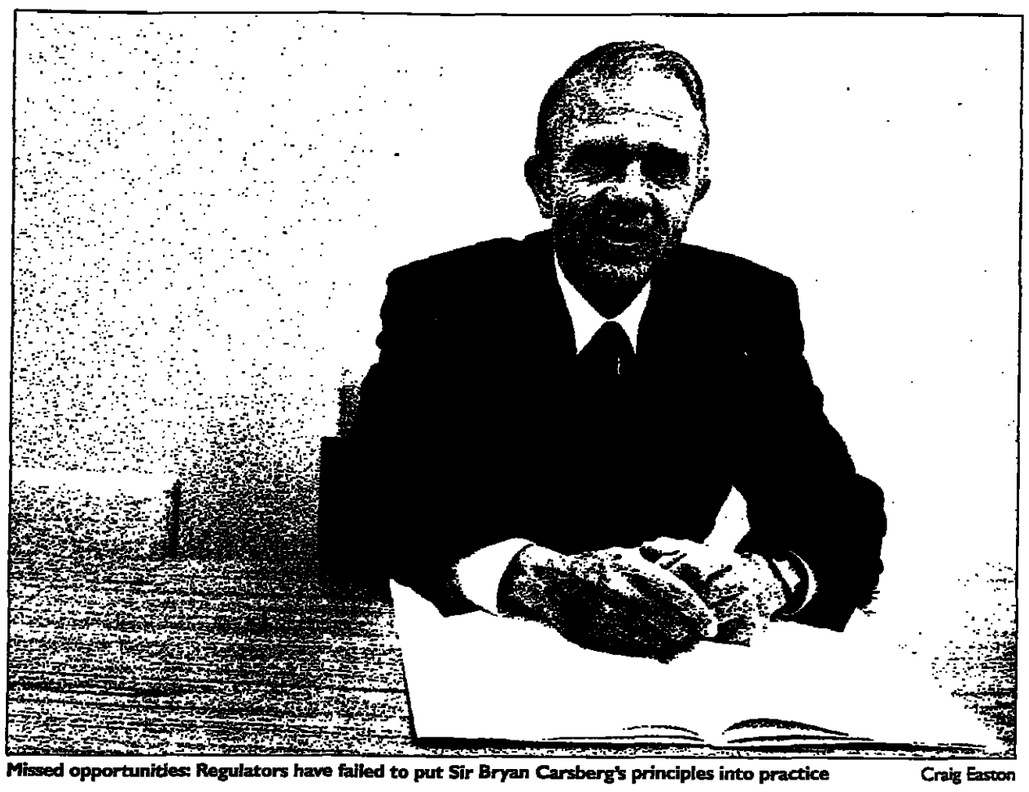
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Missed opportunities: Regulators have failed to put Sir Bryan Carsberg's principles into practice Craig Easton

The second great pensions scandal – the charges' cut

Regulators are failing to address the basic flaws in an exploitative industry, warns **John Chapman**

Saving through a personal pension plan should be very straightforward. You pass your premiums over to a company which invests them to achieve a lump sum to buy you an annuity. But the real world is full of horrors.

Pensions companies indulged themselves for years under the noses of the whole shebang of financial watchdogs. That mess is finally being cleared up, but there is a real danger the regulators will now sit back and do little to tackle the basic flaws in this largely expensive and exploitative industry.

Do you know which are the companies with low-charge products offering the best prospect of good returns? I doubt it. In 1993, the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) had a purple patch under Sir Bryan Carsberg and forced through the principle of disclosure of charges, with the help of the Treasury. Sadly, regulators have since failed dismally in putting that principle into practice.

First, they have made a cock-up on what should be disclosed. The "Key Features Document", which should provide clients with the information they need to make their choice, focuses on transfer values – the value of their pension fund if it were transferred to another provider after a given period.

But, in reality, most people do not transfer their funds. Instead, they stop paying premiums and leave their accumulated investments, misleadingly called "paid-up values", in their old fund. These paid-up values can dwindle to nothing, eaten up by mild-looking charges like capital levies and policy fees.

As was pointed out in *The Independent* last year, it is astonishing it has taken so long to recognise this. In its January 1998 report, the Personal Investment Authority (PIA), the frontline regulator, refers to hidden profit-making on paid-up values, and pledges to extend disclosure to cover them.

Most damagingly, regulators have failed to deliver the true objective of disclosure: comparisons in the financial press of charges in different products, which would filter down to consumers through the general media.

The 1993 OFT report concluded by calling for comparisons of projected (that is to say, assumed) returns after all charges at the early, intermediate and maturity stages of policies. In 1995 I suggested an ABC rating system at these three stages, which features occasionally in the financial press.

But the crucial step of getting the national press to recommend the AAA plans and warn people to steer clear of CCC plans has not been taken by the regulators. As a result, sales of the worst products are still increasing at much the same rates as the best products.

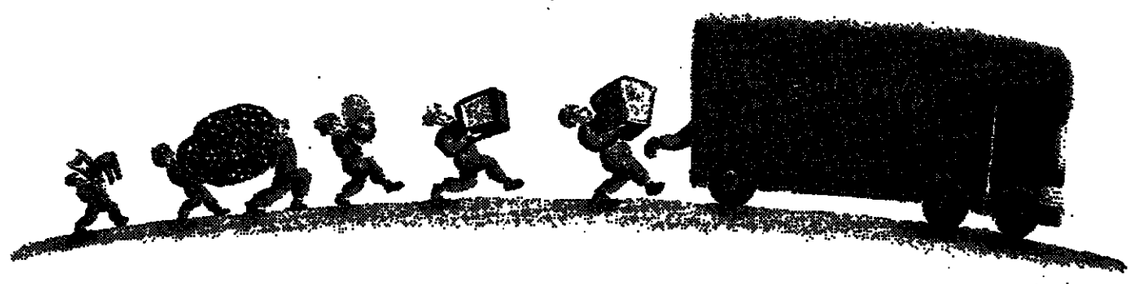
Thirdly, the regulators are behaving shamefully about the high numbers of pension plans that lapse early. The PIA does publish the persistency rates of different companies. These show that, on average, 34 per cent of plans sold by direct sales forces, and 22 per cent of those sold by IFAs, lapse within the first three years. There is tut-tutting about the quality of selling but, much to its discredit, the PIA makes no attempt to bring together the effects of the front-end loading of the often heavy charges and the effects of early lapses.

Analyses I have done for *The Independent*, the specialist magazine *Money Management* and *World in Action*, have shown that on average about a third of people taking out pension plans actually make losses on their transfers or very poor returns on their paid-up values. With some companies I have put the proportions much higher. How can any self-respecting regulator allow these widespread and harmful practices? How can ministers allow such ostrich-like regulators to continue in post? We are dealing here with people saving for their pensions, not buying lottery tickets.

Next week's article will look at the best and worst-performing companies in terms of their charges, together with some proposals on how the overall issue could be improved.

John Chapman, a former OFT official, was closely involved in the debate over disclosure of charges. He is now a freelance writer and consultant.

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How the house market lost its Miras touch

The cut in Miras from 6 April will cost the average homeowner £10 a month. But, 10 years ago, another change had far more dramatic consequences. **Paul Slade** turns the clock back

Mortgage interest relief at source – Miras for short – is now of little value to homeowners, and a popular target for chancellors who want to raise revenue at minimal political cost.

We already know that the rate of Miras relief will fall on 6 April – the new tax year – from 15 per cent to 10 per cent, saving the Government about £750m a year. Miras is generally agreed to be on its way out, and Gordon Brown may have further cuts to announce in his 17 March Budget. But it was the Conservative chancellor Nigel Lawson's 1988 Budget which brought high drama to the subject.

As 1988 began, the property market looked – to use a phrase from that era – unassailable. The year started with the average London house worth £81,452, up an astonishing 50 per cent on the figure just two years earlier. Buying property looked like a sure way to make money. Many young people, fearing it might have been their last chance to get on the property ladder, clubbed their wages together and borrowed to the hilt. Lenders, desperate to maintain their market share, fell over themselves to accept business they would not even consider today.

Ian Darby, of independent mortgage advisers John Charcol, says: "It was an extraordinary period. House prices were steaming ahead and the only way it was affordable to buy for a lot of people was to join up as couples or join with friends.

"What it did was draw a lot of people into the market who weren't ready for home ownership. There were a lot of people with no savings and no history of affording large debt repayments. At that time you could have sold mortgages with a sandwich board on your back."

In this already feverish atmosphere, Lawson decided to give the pot an extra stir. He announced in his April 1988 Budget that – from 1 August that year – two unmarried buyers purchasing a house together could no longer both claim Miras. Instead of applying to each borrower individually, the relief would apply to the single property they were buying. The same principle applied to a group of buyers sharing ownership of the house.

Miras then was worth a great deal more than it is today, as it was set at the borrower's highest tax rate – 40 per cent in the case of higher earners.

For two 40 per cent taxpayers with a £60,000 mortgage loan at a rate of 10.5 per cent, the immediate effect of the change was to increase their mortgage bill by £1,260 a year.

Not surprisingly, there was a mad rush to complete mortgage deals in the four months Lawson had left for action.

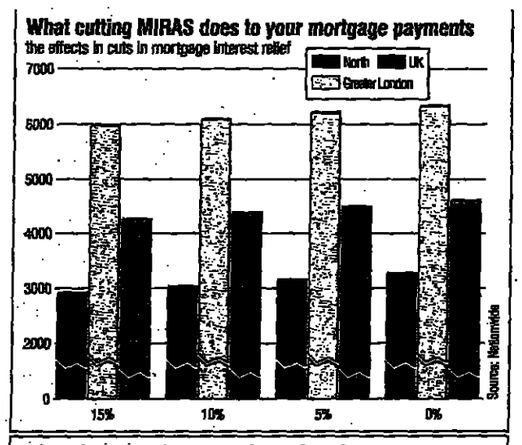
What to do if you're worried about Miras

Most borrowers could get a better deal by shifting their loan to another lender, saving far more in the process than they will lose through Miras.

Smaller building societies such as National Counties or Stroud & Swindon have to offer rock-bottom rates in order to compete with giants such as Halifax or Nationwide. Often, they will also pay fees for you, such as valuation fees. House prices in the UK have risen by an average of 13 per cent in the last year, making remortgaging possible for many homeowners who could not have considered it 12 months ago.

Philip Cartright says anyone who is on their lender's standard variable rate, has been with that lender for three years or more, and whose mortgage is less than the value of their property, could almost certainly save by remortgaging.

If remortgaging is not possible for you, and you think you will have genuine difficulty finding the extra £30 as month or so that the loss of Miras will cost you, it is better to tell your lender so now. Making special arrangements to meet the loan will dent your future credit record, but better that than simply running into arrears.



Philip Cartwright of London & Country, another independent mortgage adviser, says: "It was one of the worst decisions ever made regarding the housing market, and to give people more time to do it just fuelled the fire. A snap decision would have been better.

"The housing market was already a disaster waiting to happen – because it just was not sustainable. You were getting five people who hardly knew each other buying a property together so they could borrow £150,000, and building societies falling over themselves to lend. It was a catastrophic decision."

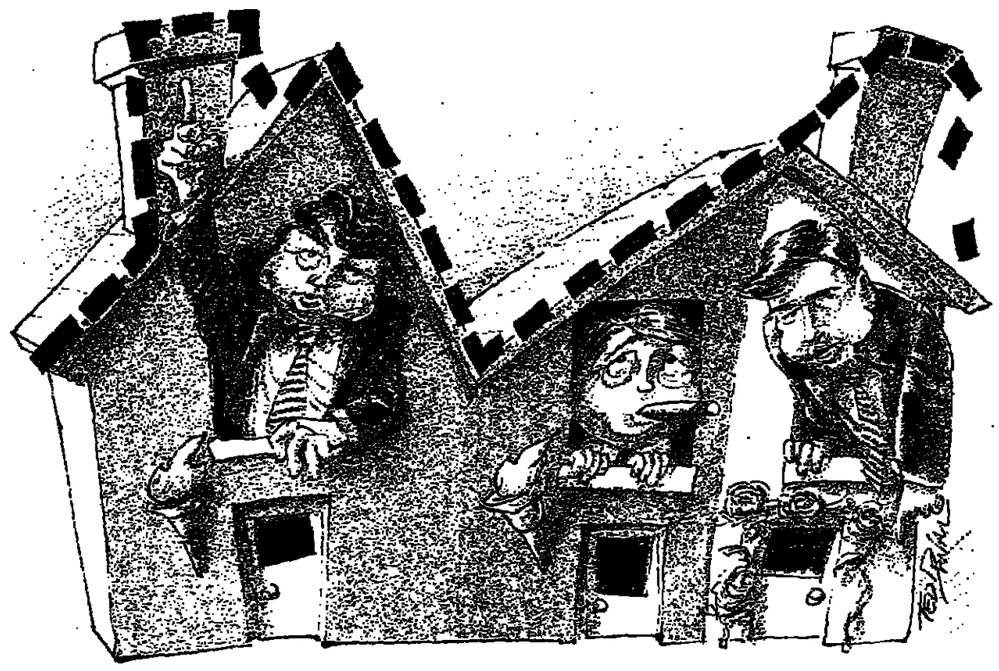
In the six months to 30 September, 1988, the price of the average London home rose from £82,886 to £93,681 – an increase of 13 per cent. But, as the August deadline passed, and interest rates started their climb to 15 per cent, buyers found the rug whipped out from under them. Higher interest rates led to a plague of defaults, and new buyers were nowhere to be found.

The capital was hardest hit, as it was here that the housing boom had been most pronounced. London's average house price peaked at £97,667 in 1989 but, by the end of 1992, had fallen back to just £66,573. Many borrowers who took out large loans in 1988 found themselves in negative equity for many years later. Some will still be suffering from black marks on the credit records today.

In his memoirs, *The View From No 11*, Lawson accepts the delay between announcing and implementing the change was wrong. But he blames the Inland Revenue for telling him lenders would be unable to reprogram their computers without adequate warning.

With five interest rate rises in the past year, some think Brown will hold off on any further cuts in Miras until next year's Budget.

Abolishing the relief altogether would cost borrowers only about another £20 a month on what they will pay from 6 April onwards. But Lawson's changes to Miras of a decade ago are an eloquent lesson that even innocent-looking Budget changes have concrete and unpredictable effects in the real world.



BARGAIN BASEMENT

Woolwich has launched a five-year fixed-rate mortgage at 6.65 per cent. Customers can borrow up to 95 per cent of the value of the home. There is an application fee of £295 and a redemption charge of six months gross interest if customers wish to switch to another lender within six years, before May 2004. Telephone 0645 757575.

NatWest is offering a similar deal, with higher rates but no application fee. Rates are fixed at 6.75 per cent until June 2003. Customers can also opt for a cash-back of £500 with a higher rate of 7.19 per cent.

Independent Mortgage Collection, a new grouping of independent mortgage advisers, is offering a mortgage with a rate of 6.99 per cent fixed for seven and a half years. Borrowers can take 100 per cent of the purchase value of the home if they pay 7.49 per cent for the same deal. Telephone 0800 731 0137.

GE Financial Assurance is launching its first bond linked to the FTSE Eurotop 100 Index, which tracks the fortunes of the 100 most actively traded blue chip UK and continental European shares. The final return is 130 per cent of the growth in the index. The bond offers a minimum return of 100 per cent of the original investment after five and a half years as capital security. Telephone 0181-380 3388.

Norwich & Peterborough building society has launched a variable-rate mortgage with a 6 per cent cashback. Its rates currently stand at 8.35 per cent, below the market norm. Customers can borrow up to 85 per cent of the property's value. An arrangement fee of £295 applies. Telephone 01733 372372.





Bulls should be haunted by bears of the past



THE JONATHAN DAVIS COLUMN

Most investors with sense are in the stock market for the long haul and treat short-term speculative gains as an unexpected bonus, rather than necessarily as confirmation of their acute insights into the market. Taking a long-term view has the merit of being a respectable as well as a thoroughly sensible approach for anyone who can afford to wait and see how life turns out in 10-15 years time.

But how long is the long term – and what sort of perspective should one take in trying to assess the current level of risk in market valuations? In recent columns, I have used two illustrations – one showing Tobin's so-called q ratio and another valuation work carried out by Barclays Capital – which trace the market's performance back to the end of the First World War. On both measures, stock markets world-wide can be seen to be at or near the top of their historical trading ranges.

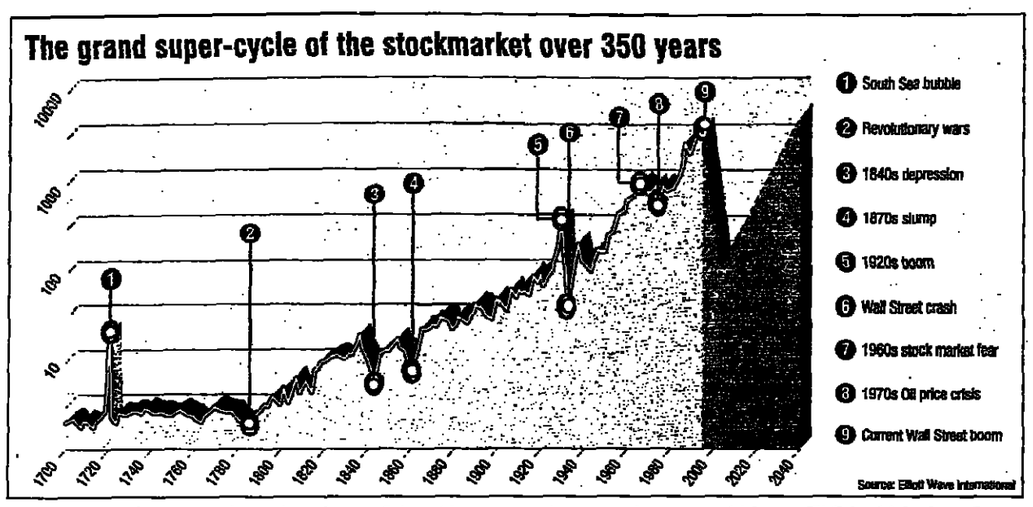
The reasons for this are explicable in terms of short-term economic prospects – low inflation, falling long-term interest rates, resilient growth, a rapid rate of technological change, and so on. The issue for investors is whether current market prices fully reflect the risk that the future will turn out to be, as so often in the past, less benign than market ratings currently assume. The smart money, I conclude, inclines towards not having too high expectations of future equity market returns.

But what if one takes an even longer historical perspective? This week, I have been looking at the work of a market analyst whose take on the level of the market dates back to the 18th century, and whose gloomy prognosis about the markets makes my caution, and that of other even better qualified market investors, sound like rank timidity. Robert Prechter is a well-known market punter in the United States. His greatest claim to fame is that, as long ago as the early 1980s, he predicted we were about to experience a "bull market of a lifetime".

He was right, of course, though it took him some time to realise how far that would take the stock market; his initial forecast was the Dow Jones Index, then trading around 800, would reach 3,700. He has subsequently raised the limit more than once, but even his enthusiasm (accompanied by intermittent bursts of gloom) has not been enough to keep pace with the actual performance of the US stock market, which this week reached a new, all-time peak of 8,583 for the first time.

Mr Prechter is a technical analyst, who bases his forecasts on the so-called Elliott Wave Theory, devised by a former naval engineer 40 years ago. His premise was that the cyclical behaviour of financial markets might appear random but in fact follow long-term patterns of boom and bust, which stretch across generations and oceans, in waves which contain predictive power.

Mr Prechter has hundreds of charts, like the one I show, which attempt to map the long-run historical behaviour of the markets back to the South Sea Bubble, and forward to the end of the next century. Leaving aside for the moment the reliability of such charts are (the data for the 18th and 19th centuries are a mixture of London and New York prices of uncertain reliability) and the credibility of the theory. What does Mr Prechter think now?



Well, he thinks the bull market is in its last throes. Not only that. We are poised, he says, on the edge of a bear market, and it won't be any old bear market either. This one stands to be Wave Five of a "Grand Supercycle" bear market, the last throw of a cycle which began way back in the 1700s. A "Grand Supercycle bear market", you should know, is about as bad as it gets in Elliott Wave Theory.

In fact, Mr Prechter says, he doesn't expect the bear market to stop until the Dow Jones has fallen all the way back to 1,000, a fall of around 85 per cent from current levels. This will probably happen around the year 2003 and be accompanied by a severe economic depression. After that, look out for bull markets which peak in the 2020s and another one (assuming you are still around to notice) in the 2050s.

Mr Prechter has a lot of advice on how to cope with this new era, such as "obtain a residence in an area which is unlikely to be the target of mob violence or looting" – all of which begs the question of whether there is anything in the premise in the first place.

Personally, I have no hesitation in saying that Elliott Wave Theory is a load of tosh. There is no basis in social science for believing that financial markets should follow succeeding wave patterns in a predictable fashion, even if the underlying data were statistically robust (which it clearly is not). An unkind critic might also point out that Mr Prechter's timing is far from perfect. He was forecasting the start of "the Great Supercycle bear market" at least three years ago, since when Wall Street has risen by over 40 per cent.

Surprisingly, perhaps, a lot of well-respected American investors are happy to say that they listen to what Mr Prechter has to say, even if (they tend to add) they don't agree with him. It is not actually hard to see why. Like a lot of technical analysis, many of Mr Prechter's charts are fascinating. Some of his comments on the manifestations of bull market psychology are well made and acute. The charts of market movements clearly contain information: the problem is interpreting them.

Ultimately, his charts do tell us something important about the state of the markets. Unfortunately, it is probably nothing more profound than what goes up does also come down. You can be certain that the current bull market in shares will end one day, and we will have a bear market – probably sooner rather than later. Not the least burden of that will be listening to Mr Prechter telling us how he had told us before if only we had bothered to listen.

'Money Makers' by Jonathan Davis, a study of Britain's most successful professional investors, has just been published by Orion Business Books at £20. To order a copy, at the specially discounted price of £15 (including postage and package) call 01903 736736, quoting the reference MMJD.

Why managers are actively copying tracker funds

Active fund managers are fighting back, if only by behaving more like their index fund rivals. **Paul Slade** reports

Twice as many active fund managers outperformed the FTSE All-Share index last year as in 1995, according to research from HSBC Asset Management.

HSBC's figures have loaded the dice in favour of active managers by ignoring the entry charges they impose, expressed as a bid/offer spread. This has a dramatic effect, giving HSBC a figure of 48 per cent of UK equity trusts beating the FTSE All-Share index in 1997.

After charges, Virgin Direct puts the figure at closer to 5 per cent. Even without charges, Fidelity believes the figure is no higher than 16 per cent.

HSBC's managing director, Alan Gadd, argues that ignoring charges allows the figures to concentrate on investment performance alone. But he admits: "On an offer-to-bid basis, it would take a phenomenal performance to beat an index which is already such a tough benchmark."

But it is the trend over time – shown in the graph below – rather than the figures themselves which is most interesting, and here there is more of a consensus. Since about half-way through last year, active fund managers have been buying into the blue-chip stocks contained in index funds, boosting their performance in the process.

Index funds try simply to replicate the performance of a given basket of shares, aiming to eliminate the risk that your fund's manager will simply pick the wrong stocks to buy. Many choose the FTSE 100 index, which consists of Britain's largest companies, as their benchmark. Over the past year or more, these companies have delivered the best growth.

Mr Gadd says: "The last three years has been an exceptional time for the index and trying to outperform it has been tremendously difficult. Active fund managers have realised that being too far away from FTSE 100 stocks was probably working against them. My feeling is that, over the past two or three years, active fund managers have moved closer to the index."

Virgin Direct's marketing manager, Gordon Maw, agrees. He says: "The market's become a bit simpler for active fund managers. Until a couple of years ago, the growth potential was all in small companies, so people were trying to pick small company stocks.

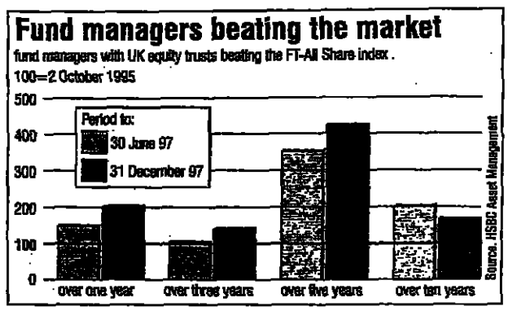
"In the last year or so, there's been a real swing back to larger companies. The active fund manager's job has become enormously easier because of that."

Fidelity's Jo Roddan adds: "There is a trend towards better active fund management. People have generally been improving their stock-picking over the past 10 years. These figures do show that active fund managers are doing better."

Mr Gadd does not question the long-term value of index funds – even his own company's figures say only 18 per cent of active funds will beat the index over a 10-year term. But he does fear that the bull market of recent years may have convinced some investors that indexation is a panacea to all their woes.

Mr Gadd says: "Our concern is that people are starting to see indexation as a quasi-guarantee. For the past few years, it has been, because the market's gone up. But I don't think people should be lulled into thinking indexation is some kind of capital protection. The worst thing about indexation is, not only do you hold all the good stocks, you hold all the bad ones."

He believes we may be in for a period where medium capitalisation stocks once again outperform their bigger rivals. "We see that as quite an interesting area at the moment," Mr Gadd says. If he is right, that could hit the index funds trapped within the narrow range of the FTSE 100.



Mr Maw, whose own index fund shadows the broader FTSE 350, says: "The bigger companies are looking good at the moment, and they're obviously performing well. But the danger with the FTSE 100 is that it's a very narrow band to track. It's purely larger companies and, if they're not performing, then you're really exposed."

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Should you place money on Asia's wheel of fortune?

As South-east Asia sinks deeper into financial crises, now could be the time to invest. **Iain Morse** explains why

Contrarian bottom picking sounds uncomfortable but may be a route to riches for investors prepared to take a risk. Contrarians buy against the market, picking sectors and stocks where values have bottomed out.

Vital to this view is that sector and stock values perform in a cyclical manner, with the prospect of currently undervalued sectors recovering to give investors a gain at some future time.

Anyone tempted by this approach might look to the Far East, the worst performing unit and investment trust sector of 1997. This week, fund manager Murray Johnstone released six-month interim results for their Scottish Asian Investment Trust up to the 31 January, showing a fall in net asset value per share of 55.3 per cent.

Across the Far East, sweet has turned to sour as the so-called Tiger economies face crisis after crisis.

Investors in Old Mutuals' Thailand Unit Trust would have received just £30.90 on 1 January 1998 for an initial investment of £100 made 12 months earlier.

Until recently, investing into Tiger funds seemed like a good bet. Glossy fund prospectuses and annual reports carried pictures of booming Eastern city states like Singapore, with high rise sky-lines and new hi-tech industries.

But Peter Montgomery, who runs the Scottish Asian Investment Trust, warns that the worst may not yet be over. Speaking from Singapore, he agrees with contrarians "that assets in this market look very cheap in the longer term, but there are still problems to come. From an individual investor's point of view, it looks cheap but could get even cheaper".

Mr Montgomery distinguishes between Tiger economy's which are already adapting to the crisis and those still in denial. "Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore have faced up to their changed circumstances and will pull through fastest."

The root problem in these fast-developing economies lie in their use of borrowed money to fund the expansion of export industries.

Some of this money has come from international sources, but much from domestic banking systems which lack cash reserves. With exporters failing to maintain growth, business bankruptcies have multiplied. Local banks, which have lent and lost, do not have enough cash to stay solvent.

"These countries are coming to foreign investors looking for more cash, but getting a poor response," warns Mr Montgomery. "What we are seeing in the worst cases is systemic failure which can only be put right by major changes in the way they conduct business."

Another fund manager, who prefers to stay anonymous, points to Malaysia as one of the worst examples of this failure.

"Chinese Malaysian businesses are being asked to do 'national service' and bail out the Prime Minister's ethnically Malaysian family and friends by lending their businesses money. This is just a recipe for further business collapses," he warns.

Tiger funds are available as unit or investment trusts. Both are collective investments, but there the similarity ends.

Unit trusts are open ended, with new money creating new fund units, and cash raised invested directly into the range of stocks specified by the trust prospectus. At any time, at least 95 per cent of funds held must be invested, even if the market is falling.

You cannot sell unit trusts on the open market, but must redeem them from the fund managers. The managers meet the cost of redemptions from the 5 per cent cash they are allowed to hold, or from selling stocks owned by the trust. This means that when markets fall fund managers remain locked into them.

Investment trusts differ from unit trusts in three important ways. Firstly, they can hold far more of their fund in cash. So fund managers can sell when a market starts to fall, and buy back when it has bottomed out.

Secondly, they can then borrow, or "gear" the trust on the value of stocks held in it. If markets are rising, this allows them to buy early and take profit. Finally, they issue shares traded like any other on the stock exchange. If you want to sell your holding, you must find a buyer.

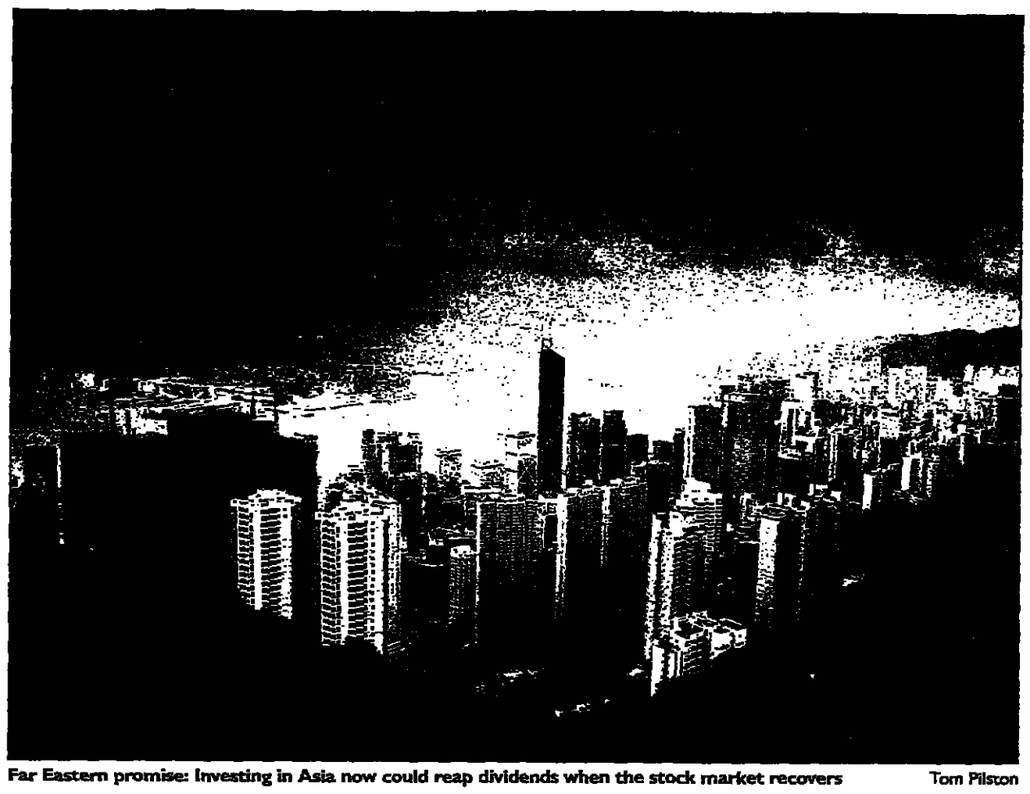
Because they are traded like other shares, they can be bought at a discount to the net asset value (NAV) owned by the fund. Many funds invested into the Tiger economies are currently trading at substantial discounts of 20 to 30 per cent on their net asset values.

In theory, this should make them a good buy, with in-built gains for investors. But, like unit trusts, the price at which investment trust shares trade is a function of demand for those shares in the market, not the real value of assets owned by the fund.

Mr Montgomery still thinks investment trusts are a better buy than equivalent unit trusts "as long as you are buying them over at least a five-year period, and are sure you won't need to sell earlier. Sooner or later, the discounts to net asset values on these shares will close."

But he warns savers that one country funds are inherently riskier than those investing across the whole sector. "Plenty of people enjoy holidays in Thailand, but this is not a good reason to put all your cash into a Thai fund. Diversification reduces risk."

Those tempted by a Tiger fund can invest a lump sum or start a regular premium saving plan. Up to £1,500, or 20 per cent of the annual general personal equity plan (PEP) allowance of £6,000 can be used to invest into Tiger funds. But, as most growth from these will be capital not income driven, the PEP charges may outweigh tax savings for many.



Far Eastern promise: Investing in Asia now could reap dividends when the stock market recovers — Tom Pilston

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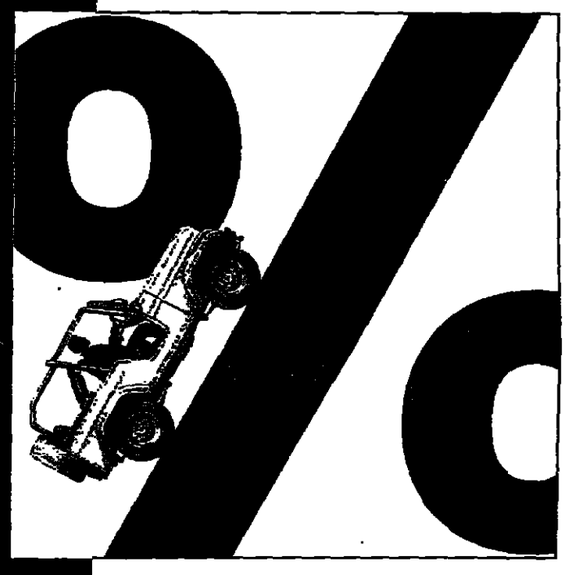
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Royal Bank of Scotland	0800 121121	10.7%	70%	£2.5K to £100K	3 years to reterm't
First Direct	0345 100103	11.2%	80%	£3K to Neg	Up to 40 years

OVERDRAFTS	Telephone	Account	Authorised % pm	Authorised APR	Unauthorised % pm	Unauthorised APR
Alliance & Leicester	0500 959595	Alliance	0.76%	9.5%	2.20%	29.8%
Bank of Scotland Direct	0500 804804	Direct cheque	–	11.0%	–	26.5%
Nationwide BS	0500 302010	Reaccount	0.97%	12.2%	2.10%	28.3%

CREDIT CARDS	Telephone	Card Type	Rate % pm	APR %	Annual Fee	Int. free period	Min Income
Capital One Bank	0800 669000	Visa	0.565%N	6.90%N	Nil	54 days	
RBS Advanta	0800 077770	Visa	0.64%N	7.90%N	Nil	56 days	
Co-operative Bank	0800 109000	Advantage Visa	0.69%N	8.60%N	Nil	0 days	
GOLD CARDS							
Capital One Bank	0800 669000	Visa	0.565%N	6.90%N	Nil	54 days	£20K
Co-operative Bank	0345 212212	Base Rate Visa	0.60%	17.90%	£120	46 days	£20K
RBS Advanta	0800 077770	Visa	0.64%N	7.90%N	Nil	56 days	£20K
STORE CARDS							

	Telephone	Payment by direct debit % PM	Payment by direct debit % APR	Payment by other methods % PM	Payment by other methods APR
John Lewis	Via store	1.39%	18.0%	1.39%	18.0%
Bhs	Via store	1.95%	26.0%	2.15%	29.0%
Marks & Spencer	01244 681681	1.97%	26.3%	2.07%	27.8%

A – Minimum age 22 yrs. Holders of comprehensive motor insurance policy or lender's existing customers
APR – Annualised percentage rate
ASU – Accident, sickness and unemployment insurance
B+C – Buildings and contents insurance
H – Higher rate applies if insurance not arranged
LTV – Loan to value
MIP – Mortgage indemnity premium
N – Introductory rate for a limited period
U – Unemployment insurance

* If completion is before 30.4.98
All rates subject to change without notice. *Source: MONEYFACTS 01692 500677 5 March 1998*

BEST SAVINGS RATES

	Telephone number	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate %	Interest interval
INSTANT ACCESS						
Clydesdale Bank	0800 445265	Savings	Instant	£1	6.75%	Qly
Stroud & Swindon BS	0345 413853	Branch Instant	Instant	£100	6.00%	Year
Northern Rock	0500 505000	Branch Select Instant	Instant	£1,000	6.85%	Year
Leeds & Holbeck BS	0500 225777	Premium Access	Instant	£5,000	7.00%	Year
INSTANT ACCESS POSTAL ACCOUNTS						
Standard Life Bank	0345 555657	Direct Access	Instant (T)	£1	6.95%	Year
Scottish Widows Bank	0845 845 0829	Instant Access	Instant (S)	£100	7.00%	Year
Saleway	0800 995995	Direct Savings	Instant (S)	£1,000	7.30%	Year
Northern Rock	0845 600 6767	Save-Direct Instant	Instant (S)	£5,000	7.80%	Year
NOTICE ACCOUNTS & BONDS						
Scarborough BS	01723 500616	Scarborough 30	30 Day	£1,000	7.60%	Year
Bristol & West	0800 202121	Postal 30	30 Day (P)	£10,000	7.80%	Year
Northern Rock	0500 505000	Select 90	90 Day (P)	£10,000	7.90%	Year
Birmingham Midshires	0645 720721	First Class 120	120 Day (P)	£10,000	7.95%	Year
CHEQUE ACCOUNTS						
Investec Bank (UK)	0171 203 1650	HICA 5000	Instant	£5,000	6.45%	Month
Halifax	01422 335333	Asset Reserve	Instant	£10,000	5.50%	Qly
Chelsea BS	0800 429429	Classic Postal	Instant	£10,000	5.70%	Year
Leopold Joseph	0171 588 2323	Instant Access	Instant	£25,000	6.70%	Year
FIXED RATE BONDS						
Norwich&Peterborough	01733 372222	Fixed Rate Bond	6 Month	£5,000	7.65% F	Maturity
Portman BS	0800 807080	Branch Fixed Rate Bond	1 Year	£500	7.50% F	Maturity
Shepshed BS	01509 503302	Fixed Rate Bond	10.3.99	£10,000	7.80% F	Maturity
Sun Banking Corp	01438 744505	Guaranteed Investment	2 Year	£25,000	7.30% F	Year
FIRST TESSAS						
Norwich&Peterborough	01733 37222		5 Year	£100	8.00%	Year
Bradford & Bingley BS	0800 562588		5 Year	£5000	8.00%	Year
Lambeth BS	0800 326632	Postal TESSA	5 Year	£1,800	7.95%	Year
Mansfield BS	01246 202055		5 Year	£500	7.90%	Year
FOLLOW-ON TESSAS						
Bradford & Bingley BS	0800 562588	Preference TESSA	5 Year	£3,001	8.05%	Year
Sun Banking Corp	01438 744505	TESSA 2 Flex	5 Year	£9,000	8.05%	Year
Norwich&Peterborough	01733 372222		5 Year	£100	8.00%	Year
Yorkshire BS	0800 378838		5 Year	£9,000	8.00%	Year
GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS (net)						
GE Financial Assurance	0181 380 3388		1 Year	£10,000	6.35% FN	Year
GE Financial Assurance	0161 380 3388		2 Year	£10,000	6.07% FN	Year
ITT London & Edin	01903 620820		3 Year	£3,000	5.70% FN	Year
Hambro Assured	0800 838020		4 Year	£10,000	5.75% FN	Year
Hambro Assured	0800 838020		5 Year	£10,000	5.85% FN	Year
OFFSHORE ACCOUNTS (gross)						
Northern Rock Guern	01481 718121	Instant Premium	Instant	£10,000	7.50%	Year
Yorkshire Guernsey Ltd	01481 710150	Offshore Extra	60 Day	£5,000	7.25%	Year
Northern Rock Guern	01481 718121	Offshore 60	60 Day	£10,000	7.85%	Year
Britannia International	01624 681100	90 Day Notice	90 Day	£10,000	7.85%	Year
NATIONAL SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (gross)						
Investment Accounts		1 Month	£20		4.75%	Year
			£500		5.25%	Year
			£2,500		5.50%	Year
			£5,000		5.75%	Year
			£10,000		6.00%	Year
			£25,000		6.25%	Year
			£50,000		6.50%	Year
Income Bonds		3 Month	£2,000		7.00%	Month
			£25,000		7.25%	Month
Capital Bonds Series K		5 Year	£100		6.25% F	Maturity
FIRST Option Bonds		12 Month	£1,000		6.75% F	Year
			£20,000		7.00% F	Year
Pensioners Guaranteed Income Bond Series 4		5 Year	£500		6.50% F	Month
Childrens Bonds Issue I (tax free)		5 Year	£25		6.25% F	Maturity

B – Withdrawals via Bank Clearing System
F – Fixed rate (all other rates variable)
N – Net rate
P – By post only

All rates are shown gross and are subject to change without notice.
Source: *MONEYFACTS 01692 500677* *5 March 1998*



BRIAN TORA

A loss of trusts

I have a soft spot for investment trusts. It goes back more than a quarter of a century to when I ran what, I believe, was the first discretionary investment trust management service. The idea was simple. We researched the trust market. When people wanted us to look after sums of money that were insufficient, in our view, to provide an adequate spread of risk through individual shares investment, trusts provided a spread. What could be simpler?

If ever there was a case of A for effort, F for achievement, this was it. The fault did not lie in the concept. After a flying start, the portfolios were taken apart by widening discounts that emerged during the mid-1970s. There you have the problem. The shares of investment trusts are quoted on the stock market like any other company. No demand, and the shares fall, regardless of the performance of the underlying assets.

This fundamental weakness is, paradoxically, their great strength. They are limited companies with a defined share capital, able to borrow to enhance shareholder return. A fixed share capital means they do not have to cope with daily inflows and outflows of money as with unit trusts, which usually means their management charges are lower. And you can often buy the shares at a discount to the value of the assets, giving you more bang for your bucks.

When crash of 1974 drove discounts to levels never before plumbed, investment trusts suffered badly. Corporate predators stepped in to vacuum up underperforming funds. And one or two smart operators found buying a trust a cheap and convenient way of launching a rights issue.

Needless to say, the economic cycle took over. Trusts' management teams became sharper. Fixed redemption dates were introduced so initial investors knew when they would get their money back. A new golden age had dawned. So, why has it all gone pear shaped again?

The answer in part lies in the dwindling importance of investment trusts in the scheme of money management. There are FTSE 100 companies with values as great as the entire trust movement. Unit trusts, very much a parvenu, are worth nearly three times the value of investment trusts. And we now have Oeics coming along on the outside.

You can tell how managers are rated by the valuations accorded to the trusts. Henderson Investors' Michael Moule has long been highly regarded, but even the Bankers Trusts, which he manages, stands at a 7 per cent discount to asset value.

I retain my affection for investment trusts and even hold a few myself. But there are plenty of young managers who now eschew them in favour of unit trusts, pointing to poor liquidity and indifferent performance as a reason to adhere to what they see as a tried and tested formula. How are the mighty fallen!

Brian Tora is chairman of the Greig Middleton Investment Strategy Committee.

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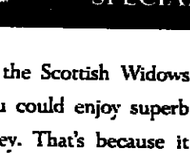
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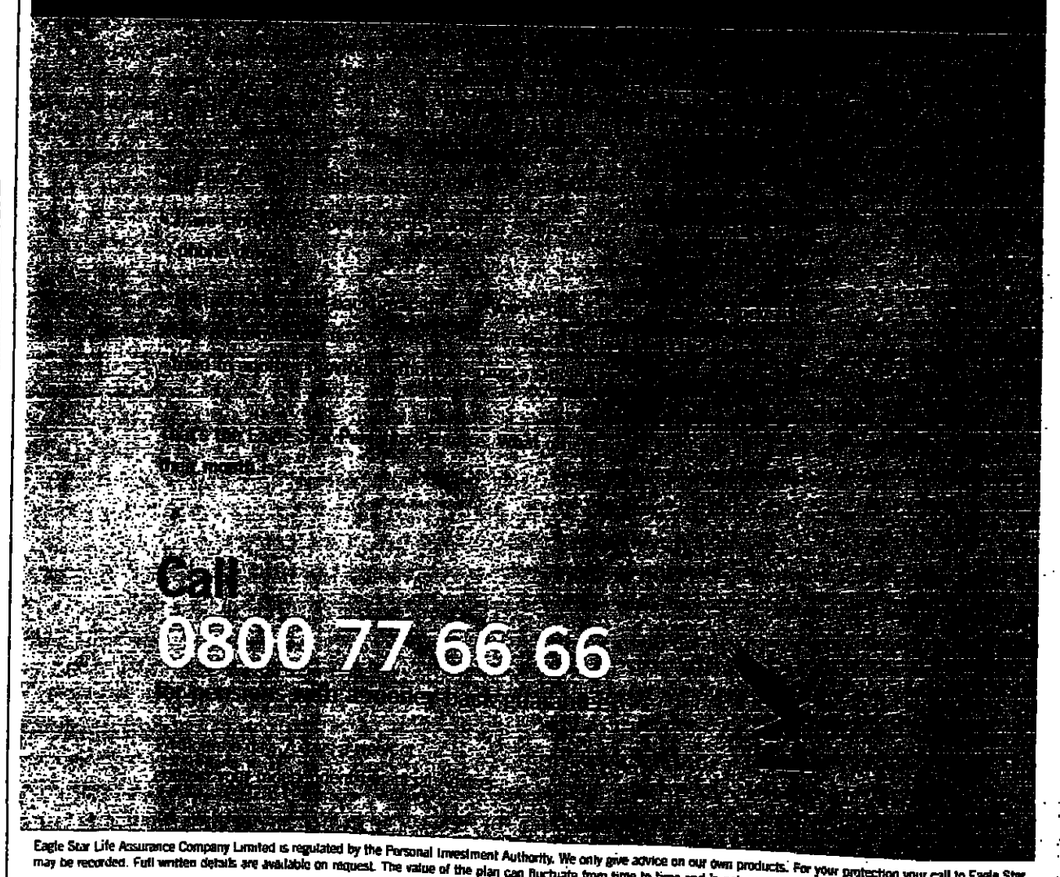
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ING



Ford comes out of its shell

A fun replacement for the old Ford Escort? You'll believe it when you see the Focus. **Gavin Green** reports from Geneva

Ask your local Ford dealer for a hand-finished Focus – the successor to the Ford Escort – and he'll probably think you're on drugs. Which is precisely what most Escort owners will think Ford's stylists have been taking, when they first see the new model on show at Geneva. It's an upshot of Ford's desire to build "statement" cars, and it's certain to turn heads when it hits British roads in September.

Under the skin it's a bit more conventional, with four-cylinder petrol engines varying from 1.4 to 2.0 litres and a new 1.8 direct-injection turbodiesel. Three- and five-door hatches are on offer, plus a four-door saloon and an estate.

And Ford hasn't forgotten Mr and Mrs Average Motorist. The Focus has substantially lower fuel consumption (10 per cent better on average, with the 1.4-litre model offering a whopping 25 per cent improvement). It won't cost any more to buy than the current Escort, will have a lower insurance rating and should be the roomiest car in its class. Ford says it's almost as spacious as the Mondeo.

The Focus competes with the latest Vauxhall Astra and VW Golf, neither of which will hit British roads until April. All three raise the stakes in the market for mid-sized hatchbacks.

Ford wasn't the only traditionally conservative maker to come out of its shell in Geneva. Toyota unveiled its newest small car to be made in Europe, the Yaris. The name sounds dumb (the Japanese have never been good at naming cars). But the car looks striking. It's a tall, five-door vehicle, looks roomy, and has loads of stowage space. The 1.0-litre engine is compact and economical. High-tech, too, with four valves per cylinder and variable valve timing.

Way upmarket, Toyota previewed its new baby Lexus at Geneva. The IS200 is Lexus's answer to the BMW 3-series. It's a rear-drive, 2.0-litre six-cylinder machine that promises to be quiet and refined – though in the wake of the drop-dead-gorgeous Alfa 156, it may be too anonymous to tempt many buyers.

Not that the new 3-series, which made its world debut at Geneva, impressed greatly. It drives superbly – as we've come to expect from BMW – and seems well made. Yet it's a car that BMW's vast and hyper-talented team must have rushed out in their lunch hour, before getting down to something more important.

In contrast, arch rival Volkswagen-Audi's A4 now outsells the 3-series in most markets, and innovative new models seem to spill forth as easily as beer flows from the Hofbräuhaus's taps.

For Geneva, the Volkswagen Group concentrated on its orphan brand, Seat. A new concept car, the Bolero, previewed the production style of the new Toledo, due in October. It has curves as delicate as flowing silk, and bears a slight resemblance to the Alfa 156.

More light relief than serious production possibilities was the Renault Zo, a cross between an off-roader and a sporty roadster, with automatic variable ride height. Creature comforts are few: it has no roof, and no windscreen.

The Geneva Motor Show, at the Palexpo, next to the airport, is held from 5 to 15 March.



Tall tail: Toyota's Yaris, left, has a Tardis-like abundance of interior space. Top, Ford's Focus – the Escort replacement with 'individuality'

Flying the coupé

Road test: John Simister takes a spin in the Citroën Xsara Coupé

Citroën, as a marque, has taken some flak of late. The cars used to be too odd: now they are thought too unadventurous. The long-term plan is to give Citroën back some individuality.

In the meantime, there's the Xsara, launched a few months ago as a five-door, Escort-sized hatchback. It is a delightful car to drive but visually a frump – which could account for its lukewarm critical reception.

But lo! There comes from the kingdom of Citroën a smarter, faster, tastier Xsara: it's a Clark Kent into Superman scenario. Welcome, please, the Citroën Xsara Coupé.

Except that there's something that doesn't quite ring true here. We shouldn't look at this particular car as part of the Citroën new deal. It's too early for that. We should view it as the company's final attempt to have a tasty coupé in the range because that, nowadays, is what you do. Never mind that it's simply a three-door, slopier-tailed version of the existing car.

There are three versions of this smarter Xsara: two relatively gentle VTR models with either 1.6 or 1.8-litre engines (£13,160 and £15,285 respectively), and the sporty, snorty VTS with 2.0 litres and a £17,515 price-tag. No other Xsara has this engine, a deep-breathing, 16-valve unit able to deliver a deeply impressive 167bhp. The same engine is used in the Peugeot 306 GTI-6, mated to a six-speed gearbox, but the Xsara makes do with just the five forward gears and saves you £950 in the process.

This can be a searingly quick car if your mood and road conditions dictate. The first thing you notice is the instant response to your steering commands, followed by the enormous grip. Then you sense subtler attributes, a nimbleness that will have you turning round after a satisfying series of bends just so you can drive through them all again. The VTS sits lower on its suspension than lesser Xsaras do, which gets rid of that slightly wayward, tip-toe feeling when you go into a corner too quickly.

The price you pay for all this is in the ride comfort, or lack of it. This is an un-Citroën-like failing, but is to be expected in a sporty car of such agility.

Inside the Xsara VTS we find comfortable, sporty-looking seats and a good tally of equipment including air conditioning. Outside, the styling is neat and rakish, but hardly adventurous. We find attractive fabrics, well-finished plastics and an air of solidity. In its identity, we find slight confusion. But if the next crop of Citroëns includes some that are as madly entertaining to drive as this one, we'll be too busy having a good time to fret about what a true Citroën may, or may not, be.



Xsara Coupé VTS: £17,515. Engine: 1,996cc, four cylinders, 16 valves, 167bhp at 6,500rpm. Performance: top speed 137mph, 0-60 in 8.5sec, 25-30mpg.
Rivals
Alfa 145 2.0 Cloverleaf: £16,245. A spirited drive and surprisingly well-made.
Audi A3 1.8T Sport: £19,011. More a marcher than a dancer.
Ford Puma: £14,850. Cheaper, wackier, entertaining to drive.
Peugeot 306 GTI-6: £18,465. Mechanical clone of Xsara; prettier to most eyes.
Renault Mégane Coupé 16V: £16,640. Lacks rear space. Fast but raw.

MY WORST CAR: ANDREA McLEAN'S FORD FIESTA



Throughout my motoring career I have driven nothing but Ford Fiestas. I once owned one – I called it Christine – which seemed possessed, constantly broke down and was written off after six months. However, I admit that my worst experience in the little car was more my fault than the Fiesta's.

I was 17 years old and had just passed my test. My friends and I had been on a big night out in Leicester.

On the way home we noticed how busy the lanes were. Then I saw warning triangles with "flood" on them. I thought we'd be fine – even when I saw water lapping half-way up the tree trunks. Then we drove past a van with people sitting on the roof, shouting at us to turn back. We didn't. By this time we were getting wet feet. I was adding to the amount of water in the car by crying. After all, this was my mum's car.

The water continued to get higher and at one point it lapped over the bonnet and the headlamps were spookily submerged. We made it to dry land. My theory is that the weight of four people kept the car in contact with the road.

Incredibly, the Fiesta kept going – long enough for me to drive around dropping off my soggy friends at their homes. Every time I opened the door, water sloshed out, and the headlamps kept flickering. Eventually, of course, the lights went out and it stopped altogether. Then it was time to phone a parent for help.

Believe it or not, the car lasted for another 11 years, although it always smelt a bit funny. The moral for me is: pay attention to weather forecasts before you go out.

Andrea McLean presents the weather on GMTV on weekdays, 6am-9am.

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Our aim is to provide an average of one newsletter every 11 days. We have achieved this for the past four years and the quality continues to improve.

Confidential hotline

We provide a confidential telephone hotline to keep you informed of up-to-the-minute information on Club runners. This is an ordinary BT line, it is NOT a premium rate 0891 number.

Our betting expert will provide you with his opinion on the chances of the horse winning the race and will also relay the trainer's report, word for word. He will also give you a value for money guide. This has proved to be highly successful. Value is a very important factor, as any professional will tell you. Our task is to give you an edge over the bookmaker.

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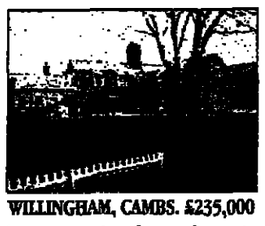
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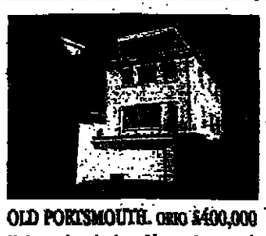
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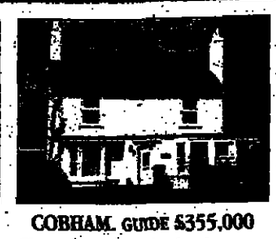
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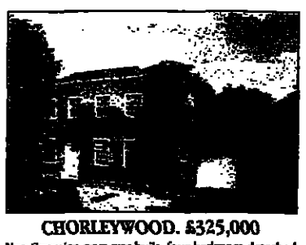


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Neo-Georgian post war built, four bedroom detached house, on an extensive, secluded plot off the Rickmansworth Road. The property has the benefit of a double garage, two reception rooms, sun loggia, large kitchen, two bathrooms, four bedrooms, gas fired central heating, double glazed lattice windows.

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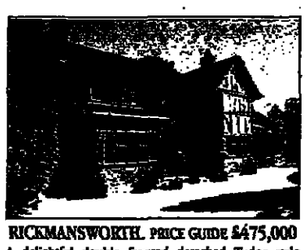


GERRARDS CROSS. £365,000

Situated within a conservation area adjoining Austenwood Common, this character home features a panelled hall, staircase and landing. Drawing room, sitting room, dining room, kitchen, utility room, four bedrooms, en suite bathroom, detached garage, gardens. Interior inspection highly recommended.

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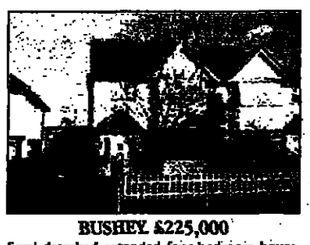


RICKMANSWORTH. PRICE GUIDE £475,000

A delightful double fronted detached Tudor style house on the edge of Batchworth Heath offering a wealth of character and spacious accommodation. 4 Bedrooms, 2 bathrooms (1 en suite), 3 reception rooms, kitchen, breakfast room, gas central heating, double garage, garden.

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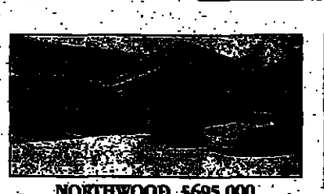


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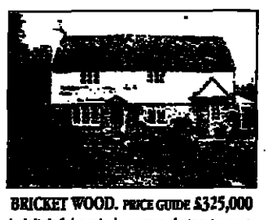
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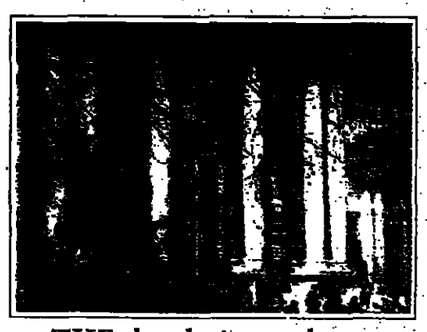
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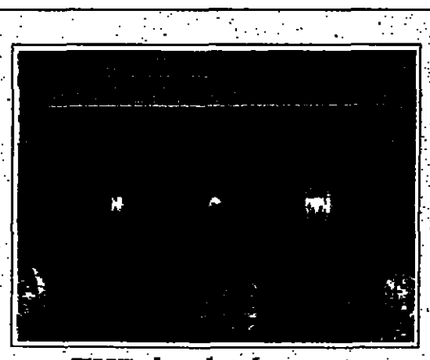
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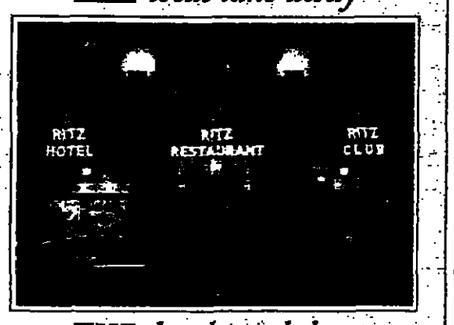
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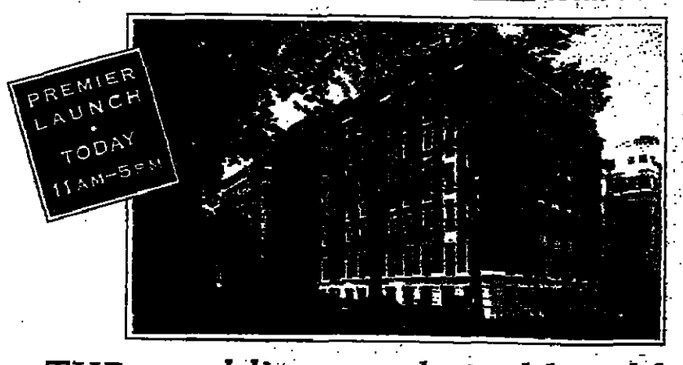
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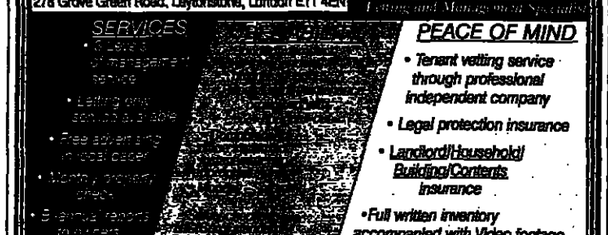
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Business Abroad - Buying & Selling

The cost of saying goodbye

Breaking up is hard to do – especially when your home is in one partner's name only. **Ginetta Vedrickas** examines what you can do to ease the pain of division of property



Love will tear us apart: Paula and Bob's acrimonious split is typical of many couples who end up arguing over property

It happened to Paula and Bob. It happened to Donald and Ivana. And this week it seems to have happened to FW and Mrs De Klerk. The thrill is gone and the love nest is subject to arbitration. While some couples make creative plans to solve their housing problems, others wrangle over ownership of their major financial asset. Who gets the house when love goes limp?

John moved into Anna's home in Battersea, London, inherited from deceased Estonian parents, in 1982. They had a daughter and spent years restoring the house before buying a larger property nearby. "It was in a terrible state. A woman with four sons had lived there and had done nothing to it. They must have all had poor aim as the floors stank of urine and the bath was disgusting," says John, who set to work on what was to be their family home. "I decorated one room at a time, working until midnight and then crashing out. I didn't go out for two years."

John worked continually on the house and Anna, an accountant, began to socialise without him until the inevitable happened – she met Richard. Had restoration caused the rift? "Four years of decorating puts a huge strain on you," says John. By this stage the couple were still together in the house but were rowing fiercely. Things came to a head one day and Anna, John and Richard sat down for a chat about the situation. John says: "Richard was loaded and I don't know where I got the figure from but I said 'I'm not going without forty grand'." Richard said: "I'll let you have the money tomorrow," and he did.

John bought a one-bedroom flat round the corner and Richard moved into the "family home". Was John bitter at losing his partner and his home? "In a way I was glad she was finally happy as we hadn't been," muses John, who professes not to have been attached to the house. Perhaps memories overwhelmed Richard and Anna, who moved shortly afterwards. An unmarried joint mortgagee, John is relieved that his financial situation is secure and believes the courts would have been less generous.

Unmarried partners and single sharers have no automatic claim but must prove their contribution to the property. However, the Law Commission is currently preparing a report on disputes between unmarried couples. Draft proposals will, if implemented, give the unwed some of the legal rights protecting married spouses. The commission believes that when a relationship ends, partners may have the right to claim against the other's property.

Guilt and bitterness are often motivating factors behind who gets the house. Property prices can add to the antagonism. Eloise, an advertising executive, recounts a sorry scene at her solicitors after selling a flat in Herne Hill, London, following an acrimonious split. She got nothing because her £25,000 profit was going straight into another property while Charlie, a mature student, received an equivalent cheque for his bank account: "He spat, 'Is that it then?' as he got it. I thought it was more than enough as I'd been supporting him for years and he was going off round the world with his share. But I was about to take on an enormous mortgage alone."

Stuart Lockyear, the lawyer for Stephens Innocent, who represented Paula Yates, believes property is a major asset and symbolic of a state of mind: "It keeps people connected to each other for a while longer and shows that feeling is still there whether it be love or hate." Mr Lockyear points out that it is always advisable to settle out of court and avoid legal battles. The Family Law Act will force couples to prove to the judge that they have made proper arrangements for children and assets before a divorce is granted. This may help couples to act sensibly but could delay proceedings.

Maurice's cautionary tale is a warning of how a lengthy battle can have lasting effects – including an unpleasant nickname. Maurice and his girlfriend bought a house in Blackheath, south-east London, of which he, as chief wage earner, was the sole mortgagee. The relationship faltered and Maurice left, married someone else and had children: "I felt guilty but, practically, my girlfriend couldn't afford the mortgage and the house was too big for her. She refused to pay anything, rent part of it out or sell. I was stuck paying two mortgages and supporting two households, which I just couldn't afford."

The house plummeted in value until it was repossessed, leaving the girlfriend with nothing. And Maurice? "I was landed with the entire debt – £125,000, which I can never, ever pay off. When my friends moan about money I tell them they don't know they're born." His nickname? "They call me debt-boy."

Relate: 01788 573241.
Stephens Innocent: 0171 353 2000.



PENNY JACKSON

Make your home in a shell

In its latest London residential survey, FPD Savills reports that one of the trendiest styles of Nineties living, the shell apartment, accounts for just 2 per cent of all current units compared to 12 per cent a year ago. It seems that although buyers like the idea of loft living, and of stamping their own mark on a place, they prefer in the end to pay more and buy their loft fully fitted out by the developer. Lofts were originally very much the territory of the creative professions but many buyers without a particular flair for design feel daunted by the challenge of filling a large empty space. The work often adds a good £50,000 to the cost of the shell. Nervous buyers can see now that in the second-hand market individualistic interior designs can be difficult to sell. One of the few buildings with shell apartments is The Factory at Shepherdess Walk, off City Road. Manhattan Loft Corporation has 29 shells remaining out of 50, priced from £155,000 to £400,000. The average size is just 1,500 sq ft. Sales office: 0171 490 3949.

Studio flats in the centre of London are making a comeback. When property prices fell, they plummeted, but now that they have emerged from the doldrums, smarter and often close to regenerated areas, prices are rising. Winkworth is finding a new demand for studios from young professionals and also those who live out of town but need a city base. Apparently there is little price differentiation between the central London postal areas with the majority changing hands at between £70,000 and £100,000. "They used to be the cheap and scruffy alternative to one-bedroom accommodation, the preserve of the volume landlord looking for high yields and the buyer with a low budget," says Hilary Wade. "They are becoming the new hotel rooms of central London". They also fit the bill for anyone who wants to walk to work, since a great many of the new studio flats have popped up in areas close to the City.

By-passes normally bring their share of protest but if the estate agents Lane Fox are correct, residents west of Gloucester should see certain property prices rise by as much as 10 per cent now that the Cirencester by-pass has been opened. The new road puts the area within reach of London buyers. The drive-time has been cut from almost three hours on a bad day, to the two hours which tends to be the cut-off point for Londoners. A Georgian house in Taynton, west of Gloucester, which Lane Fox has been marketing at a guide price of £525,000, would have been closer to £1m had it been east of Gloucester. Tim Lawson, a director, expects that gap to narrow over the next few years.

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Bright and beautiful – but not if you stick with magnolia. **Rosalind Russell** looks at the multi-hued alternatives

Be brave, splash out on a little colour

Despite determined efforts to jolly up the British approach to colour in home decor, we remain, it seems, resolutely wedded to Magnolia. Only a few adventurous souls break ranks and choose Lemon Zing or Tobago Green for the living room walls. As the DIY store Homebase reports, twice as much magnolia is sold as the next most popular colour... safe, dependable Primrose Yellow. And Homebase should know: last year they sold enough own-brand emulsion to paint an area the size of Greater London.

Annabel Alton, a colour consultant, is one of those trying to nudge us into deeper waters, decoratively speaking. A member of the Chartered Society of Designers, Annabel has worked her way through the spectrum in a variety of industries, from American knitting firms, through paint and textiles, to furnishings and carpets. Annabel says the next year will see homeowners choosing ice pastels, like minty green, powder blue, soft lilac and pistachio. Our brief, reckless affair with Mediterranean earthy tones is cooling (too bad if you've just re-tiled the kitchen in terracotta and red) and we'll soon be seduced by what she describes as liquid blues. Indigo, hyacinth, aqua and watery greens are recommended.

Whether or not both parties in a couple will agree on this is debatable. According to Dulux, more than half the women questioned in a survey said they made the decisions on colour schemes for the living room. Men claimed they made 19 per cent of the decisions, but their partners disputed this, saying the figure was closer to 5 per cent. So while some chaps believed it really was their clever choice to have China Rose on the walls, they were plainly manoeuvred into position.

Most women, according to Dulux, think they are better at colour schemes than men... which is obviously why 21 per cent of those questioned admitted they had arguments over the decorating.

Colour shouldn't be the first decision when decorating a room anyway, says Annabel Hall, an interior designer. Furniture and lighting should come first.

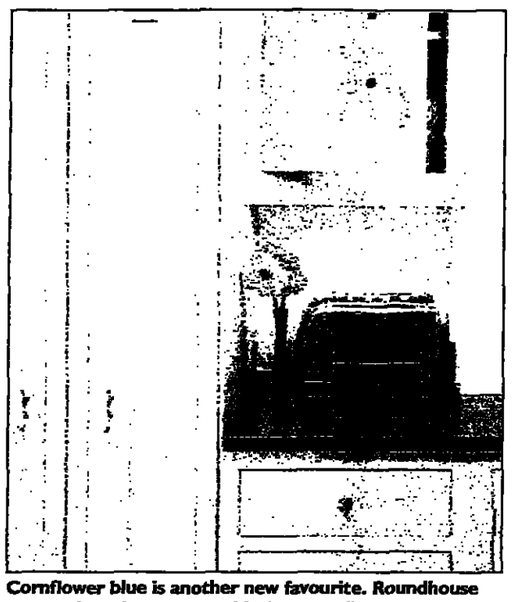
"Colour is the tip of the pyramid, but of course it's vitally important because that's what you see at the end of the job... like new clothes at the end of a long slimming campaign."

In Ms Hall's experience, suggesting unexpected colour combinations – like amethyst with mint green and yellow – can lead to a revolt, which is hardly surprising.

"People are often surprised that I know, the moment I meet them, what colour and style they will like. But that's my job."

Where striking colours have had more success with consumers is in the kitchen.

Bold scarlet fridges and blue cookers have become quite acceptable – although it's harder to prise buyers' fingers from tried-and-tested white washing machines. The Waring professional blender – first introduced in 1935 – has just been launched in chilli red. It also comes in chrome, burgundy, blue, green and white and costs around £149.



Cornflower blue is another new favourite. Roundhouse says cupboards are painted inside as well as out



Colourful kitchens seem to have caught the British homeowner's imagination more quickly than other rooms. Roundhouse Design suggests mixing and matching colours

Kitchen design companies are moving away from conservative pine, limed oak and white and offering more confident colours. Roundhouse Design, based in north London, say their customers' favourite colours are citrus orange, lime green, cornflower blue and hot pink, but that's trendy Camden for you. They suggest mixing and matching colours, which are painted inside the cupboards and shelves as well as outside and are hand-finished on site. If the fashion changes, you can have the units repainted. And as Homebase is about to launch a new One-Coat range, it might not be such a boring job.

In the way of all paint companies, which give their products names like Dublin Moss instead of green, the One-Coat comes in shades of viola, lime and canary.

Prices start at £9.99 for a 2.5-litre tin, rising to £11.99 in May at the end of the introductory offer. Their own brand of "historic" colours is expected to rival the popularity of the Farrow and Ball and National Trust ranges, perceived by some to be more up-market. Edinburgh Sandstone and Winchester Red sound suitably intellectual and expensive. Dulux, which also sells a "heritage" range covering Georgian, Victorian, Edwardian and Art Deco colours, can advise on what would look most authentic in your home. They are a little more riotous in their Indian Summer range, which seeks to persuade us we can import some Indian magic into grey British homes with Tikka red, Maharajah blue and Rajasthan pink. But beware of pink. Dulux says a fifth of customers in its survey saw it as the colour actress Jane Seymour would have in her bedroom. And Homebase admits its own Pink Clover was the most unpopular colour of last year.

If you persist in being a stick-in-the-mud brownie, at least try rich camel, burgundy brown and leather tan, suggests Annabel Alton. And accent it with deep grey and navy.

All 1,674 Dulux colours can be mixed at most Homebase stores. Homebase also offers its own 72 colours, in four finishes and six types of paint. Really, it's amazing only 21 per cent admitted to arguing over it.

Dulux Trade Advice Centre, 01753 691690 or on the Internet http://www.dulux.com/. Roundhouse Design, 0171 428 9955. For stockists of Waring blenders, Robert Coupe (UK), 0181 232 8171. Homebase paints, 0645 801 800.

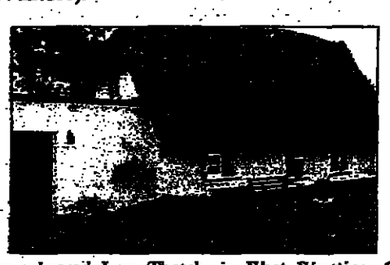
THREE TO VIEW: IN COLOUR



Luton Hoo Station House, a fetching pale pink, used to be the stationmaster's house. On the Bedfordshire/Hertfordshire border, the station was closed by Dr Beeching in the Sixties, despite being used by the Queen, her father George VI and Sir Winston Churchill when they visited the Luton Hoo estate. The property is now a three-bedroom house with the kitchen in the former ticket office. The track has been removed, but the platform remains. It's for sale through Bidwells for £185,000 (01604 605050).



Number 9 Bridge Place in Rye, East Sussex is an early 19th century two-bedroom townhouse in the town's conservation area. It is painted pale primrose. It has a single-storey addition at the back, also painted. The drawing room has dado-height panelling, the doors are natural polished pine. Both bedrooms have fitted wardrobes and the main bedroom has polished floorboards. The current owners rent a garage space opposite from Railtrack, but local residents' parking permits are available at £50 a year. £85,000 through Phillips & Stubbs (01797 227338).



Cream-coloured Low Thatch, in West Wratting, Cambridgeshire, 12 miles from Saffron Walden, is a Grade II listed 18th century house with a timber frame. The 15ft sitting room has a brick floor and an inglenook fireplace with a wood burner. The main bedroom has a sloping ceiling and exposed timbers. There's a boxroom (or bedroom for a very small person) and another bedroom on the ground floor. The rear gardens have views over farmland. Offers around £150,000 to Mullucks (01279 755400).

Portuguese retirement haven offers both sun and security

The Algarve is an old favourite for holidays. But why not live there? **Mary Wilson** reports

In the twilight of one's life, thoughts are bound to turn to where you want to live as you get older. For many people, the thought of going into a residential retirement home is not pleasant. Alternatively, your children might be able to accommodate you, or you could move to sheltered housing, where you live independently but have the security of 24-hour helplines and a resident warden.

Or, you could copy John and Virginia Butlin's example and move from Cornwall to a sheltered home in Portugal, where you get both the extra care if you need it, plus a wonderfully warm climate, as good for the spirits as it is for the health.

"We are in our seventies, John is only five years away from 80, and we decided we had to do something while we were still compus mentis," says Virginia.

"We will have our own home, which has just been built, with the knowledge that there is a beautiful nursing home close by with medical staff – should we need it later on".

Monte Da Palhagueira is owned by the Amesbury Group, whose founder, Mary Cornelius-Reid, runs three successful retirement homes in the south of England, all in elegant period houses with retirement homes alongside.



Southern Portugal offers charming architecture, picturesque scenery and and an equable climate – every retiree's dream

The Portuguese development is set in 22 acres of undulating land with olive trees and old stone walls, near the village of St Barbara De Nexe and 20 minutes from Faro airport.

Mary bought the site in 1991 and converted the old farmhouse and adjoining barns, transforming these into an attractive nursing home. In the adjacent 19th-century guesthouse, she has made an attractive dining room, where owners of the retirement homes can take their meals.

Outside the nursing home is a swimming pool which can be used by any resident. There are plans to build a church to be used by the local community and a coffee shop and laundry will be soon be up and running. A little hairdressing salon on site is already used by many of the villagers, as well as by the residents.

Thirty two-bedroom retirement homes (plus one detached house) will be built in typical Portuguese architectural style in small terraces of three, all with wonderful views over the hills.

The properties are sold on a loan basis, repayable six months after the house is vacated. This negates the need to pay CISA tax (like VAT) which would amount to around 10 per cent. Prices range from £75,000 to £125,000, depending on size, and there is a basic service charge, payable quarterly in advance, of £430 for single occupation, £585 for double. This covers twice weekly domestic help, weekly laundry collection and upkeep of communal areas. A 24-hour nurse call link is provided and owners have access to the doctor, who comes into the nursing home twice a week to hold a surgery.

There is no reciprocal agreement with the British national health system. But if you are under 74 you can opt into the Portuguese version. Many people take out private health insurance. It is also worth keeping up voluntary payments to the British NHS so that you can immediately take advantage of it should you return home. In Portugal, doctors cost about £20 a call-out, but medicines are expensive. However the doctors who work for Monte da Palhagueira are some of the cheapest on the Algarve.

For more information, ring the Amesbury Group (01980 622957) or Monte Da Palhagueira (00 351 8992 692)

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Beware buyers, it's a jungle in there

Rainforest birds are not the usual way to improve your property's value. They do give it character, though, says **Penny Jackson**



Teri the toucan has no qualms about discarding unwanted fruit on the hall floor. She is, after all, 'one of the family', Jane says
Photograph: Rui Xavier

A shriek from the landing and an extraordinary beak pokes through the banisters, rattling them for attention. A green carpet liberally speckled with stains from discarded fruit has been treated more like a forest floor than a hall floor. It isn't everybody who would let their home be taken over by a toucan.

But then Jane Tremlett, whose London house is a menagerie of Doctor Dolittle proportions, is not fazed by a messy bird which is as gregarious and noisy as a child. While others hesitate before allowing the dog upstairs, or panic when the cat scratches the wallpaper, this refugee from the rainforests has the run of the house. As she cuddles the bird, it starts to purr like a cat and Mrs Tremlett explains that life in a cage would kill the toucan. "Teri is one of the family. She adores us and we couldn't keep her any other way." Other birds she does have in cages – in the sitting room, the kitchen, and the aviary in the garden.

The house is an animal lover's paradise but an estate agent's nightmare. Pets take their toll on a property, which is why so few landlords allow them. Paintwork gets chipped, carpets ruined and on the sales side, prospective buyers who have to hold their noses when going round a house are not often keen to make a return visit.

As we step over an aged rabbit in Jane's kitchen, past a conservatory with tropical tortoises and tiny turtles into a garden with yet more rabbits and guinea pigs, she admits that her house has been ruined by the animals. "Because of the way the toucan breathes we can't paint the house or even beat the carpets. She couldn't stand it."

Half-eaten lampshades dangle from the light fittings and chunks are missing from a door. "The parrots have a go at them when they're not after each other. They've even started on the cable. One did give a burglar a fright, though." Most people, believes Mrs Tremlett, who owns Chiswick Pets in west London, underestimate the space needed by birds and reptiles. The neighbours also have to be considered. "If our aviary wasn't soundproofed, the noise would be overwhelming."

Unless an estate agent is unfortunate enough to be asked to value the house of the woman in north London who has five iguanas roaming free, dogs and cats are the worst they have to encounter. The trouble with most owners is that they fail to see why not everyone finds their pets lovable. A good many buyers from abroad, particularly, are frightened of animals, says Adam Carey of Friend & Falcke. "We found it quite difficult to sell a lovely Chelsea house because the dogs would salivate at the sight of a stranger. We had to insist they were locked up. But if they didn't get you, the parrot would." Rentals are particularly hard to find for pet owners.

In America, some leases carry a requirement that any cats are de-clawed – not likely to go down well in this country. Penny Parr-Head, of Hamptons International, says that landlords, not surprisingly, often ask for a deposit of three months in case of damage and the lease would carry a specific pet clause about cleaning. "We let one Fulham house to an immaculately dressed woman. When we visited the house it was a horror of animal faeces and open tins of food. The animals had clearly not been out for months." But she has also known doubtful landlords to be won over on meeting an animal. The large London estates have a blanket clause in leases saying no pets, but a good reference on an animal can soften that. Edward Mead of Douglas & Gordon says that over the years a number of sales have been lost because of the clause. "It's not intended to keep out the ageing pooch, rather the exotic pets some people choose." Like toucans perhaps. But even the Tremletts have a yen for an animal-free zone. Pushed out by their pets, they will all be moving to a farmhouse in Devon with space and outhouses. Toucan permitting, of course.